ISIS AND SARAPIS IN THE ROMAN WORLD

RELIGIONS IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

FORMERLY

ÉTUDES PRÉLIMINAIRES
AUX RELIGIONS ORIENTALES
DANS L'EMPIRE ROMAIN

EDITORS
R. VAN DEN BROEK H.J.W. DRIJVERS
H.S. VERSNEL

VOLUME 124

ISIS AND SARAPIS IN THE ROMAN WORLD

BY

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E.J. BRILL
LEIDEN · NEW YORK · KÖLN
1995

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The paper in this book meets the guidelines for permanence and durability of the Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity of the Council on Library Resources.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Takács, Sarolta A.
Isis and Sarapis in the Roman world / by Sarolta A. Takács.
p. cm. — (Religions in the Graeco-Roman world, ISSN 0927-7633 ; v. 124)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 9004101217 (alk. paper)
1. Isis (Egyptian deity)—Cult—Rome. 2. Serapis (Egyptian deity)—Cult—Rome. 3. Rome—Religion. I. Title. II. Series.
BL2450.I7T35 1994
299'.31—dc20 94–33778
CIP

Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

Takács, Sarolta A.:
Isis and Sarapis in the Roman world / by Sarolta A. Takács. - Leiden ; New York ; Köln : Brill, 1994
(Religions in the Graeco-Roman world ; Vol. 124)
ISBN 90-04-10121-7
NE: GT

ISSN 0927-7633
ISBN 90 04 10121 7

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A. Epigraphical Corpora

CIG	Corpus inscriptionum Graecarum.
CIL	Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum.
IDR	Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae.
IGBul	Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae.
IGRR	Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes.
ILS	Inscriptiones Latinae selectae.
ILLRP	Inscriptiones Latinae liberae rei publicae.
IOSPE	Inscriptiones orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini.
ISM	Inscriptiones Scythiae minoris.
OGI	Orientis Graeci inscriptiones selectae.
PIR	Prosopographia imperii Romani.
RIU	Die römischen Inschriften Ungarns.
SEG	Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum.
SIG	Sylloge inscriptionum Graecarum.
SIRIS	Sylloge Inscriptionum Religionis Isiacae et Sarapiacae.

B. Numismatic Corpora

BMCRR	British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Roman Republic.

BMCRE British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Roman Empire.

RIC Roman Imperial Coinage.

C. Books and Articles

AAntHung Acta antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae.

AArchHung Acta archaelogica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae.

AC L'Antiquité classique.

AE L'Année epigraphique.

AJP American Journal of Philology.

ANRW Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung.

ArchCl Archeologica classica.

BAR British Academy at Rome.

BCAR Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma.

BCH Bulletin de correspondance hellénique.

BEFAR Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome.

BFS Bulletin de la Faculté des Lettres Strasbourg.

BIFAO Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale.

BJ Bonner Jahrbücher.

CEFR Collection de l'École Française de Rome.

CJ	Classical Journal.
CQ	Classical Quarterly.
CRAI	Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.
EPRO	Études préliminaires des religions orientales dans l'empire romain.
HABES	Heidelberger althistorische Beiträge und epigraphische Studien.
HThR	Harvard Theological Review.
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum.
JDAI	Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts.
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.
JÖAI	Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts.
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies.
LEC	Les études classiques.
MEFRA	Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'École Française de Rome.
NT	Novum Testamentum. An International Quarterly for New Testament and Related Studies.
RE	Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft.
REA	Revue des études anciennes.
REL	Revue des études latines.
RGVV	Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten.

RHR	Revue de l'histoire des religions.
RM	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung.
RPAA	Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia di Archeologia.
RPh	Revue de Philologie.
TAPA	Transactions and Proceedings of the Amercian Philological Association.
YClS	Yale Classical Studies.
ZÄS	Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde.

PREFACE

The number of books about Isis and her cult in the Roman world is ever increasing. Manifold hypotheses have helped refine our picture and understanding of this mystery cult and its principal deities in the Mediterranean religious and conceptual context. The various studies did this by inspiring the reader either to embrace the proposed models and further them or to dismantle them and propose new ones. I think this an important point, one that I feel needs to be stressed again and again; new scholarship, whether agreeing or disagreeing with what went before, has its roots in these studies. Simply put, agreeing or disagreeing, we stand on the shoulders of those who went before us.

The purpose of this study is threefold. Its first objective is to gain a more precise picture of the processes that effected the integration of the cult of Isis among Roman cults. The second is to probe the employment of Isis and Sarapis independent of their cultic context and, the third, to analyze their function in the Rhine and Danubian provinces. It is in these areas that we find the highest degree of veneration of oriental gods. The Rhine and Danube marked not only the Roman frontier, but they also served as important trade routes. The frontier concept touches on the question of integration of peripheral areas and, consequently, their subordinate relationship to the administrative and religious center: Rome. The trade routes point to the issue of the cult's propagation.

This book is a revised version of my doctoral thesis: *Roman Politics and the Cult of Isis and Sarapis* (University of California, Los Angeles, 1992). I wrote this thesis in Heidelberg and Berlin, while holding a German Academic Exchange Service Fellowship (DAAD) from September 1990 to March 1992. In Heidelberg, I profited immensely from Professor Dr. Drs. h.c. Géza Alföldy's generous comments and the stimulating atmosphere of his Seminar with its extensive epigraphical databank. At the Freie Universität in Berlin, it was Professor Dr. Paul Speck who sharpened my mind to important questions that span from the ancient to the modern world. I would like to thank Drs. István Tóth and Zsolt Visy (Janus Pannonius University, Pécs, Hungary) who gave me the opportunity

to introduce my findings to a larger audience, their students. István Tóth's expertise on the Eastern cults in Pannonia and his challenging questions have been exceedingly stimulating. Once more I would like to express my gratitude to the initial readers of my dissertation, Professors Andrew Dyck, Bariša Krekić, and my thesis advisor Ronald Mellor, and happily add Professor John Nicols of the University of Oregon. Their careful reading and suggestions opened 'new avenues of discovery.' An invitation to 'The Study Group on Religion and Myth in the Ancient World' at Boston University and a recent seminar on Livy, conducted by Professors Ernst Badian and Cynthia Damon, gave me a welcome chance to rethink some of my ideas about Roman religion in most stimulating environments.

A Harvard Junior Faculty Grant facilitated the last stretches of this project. I thank my research assistant David Jerome Kirsch and Ariana Traill for their help. Finally, I dedicate this book to my husband, Richard Stadtherr, whose unceasing support and computer skills made all this a reality.

Cambridge, Massachusetts
September 1994

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1) Misconceptions

Despite some recent correctives, the study of the cult of Isis, as other so-called oriental cults, is still heavily burdened by misconceptions that too easily find their way into secondary literature. There is the belief that non-Romans and Romans of the lower stratum, especially the demi-monde, were devotees of Isis[1]. While the former found in the mysteries of Isis an escape from dreary reality, the latter, operating outside the morally acceptable norm, saw in Isis a new and potent Aphrodite. The underlying thought behind this assumption is that the traditional Roman moral code, the *mos maiorum*, did not guide these groups. Foreigners, simply not bound to it, looked for a less rigid and more accommodating form of religion. The *masses*, naturally uneducated, uncultivated, and emotionally weak, were not, in contrast to the upper class, able to master the onslaught of any oriental salvation religion and simply succumbed to these gods.

Were one to believe in a gradual decline of "the brilliance of the Hellenic mind[2]," one also could take the period of the waning Roman Republic into consideration when the lower classes, more and more marginalized by the elite, are said to have embraced Isis[3]. Much of what one reads refers to the lower stratum of the *populus Romanus* and the demi-monde that found the Egyptian goddess

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[1] This notion was introduced by G. Lafaye *Histoire du culte des divinités d'Alexandrie. Sérapis, Isis, Harpocrate et Anubis hors de l'Égypte depuis les origines jusqu'à la naissance de l'école néo-platonicienne, BEFAR* 33 (Paris, 1884) and "L'introduction du culte de Sérapis à Rome," *RHR* 11 (1885), 327-9 and found (and is still finding) a place in too many general and introductory books dealing with Roman religion.

[2] This is one of the three stereotypes W. Burkert *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1987), 2-3 pointed out. There is the belief that mystery cults were 1) "typical of late antiquity (...) when the brilliance of the Hellenic mind was giving way to the irrational," 2) "oriental in origin, style, and spirit," and 3) "indicative of a basic change in religious attitude, one that transcends the realistic and practical outlook of the pagan in search of higher spirituality."

[3] A. Alföldi, "Isiskult und Umsturzbewegung im letzten Jahrhundert der römischen Republik," *Schweizerische Münzblätter* 5 (1954), 25-31.

attractive, for they, so it seems, certainly did not have the 'finesse' and erudition to recognize Isis for what she was, namely, an utterly un-Roman goddess. Just like the Bacchanalia, Isis stirred the fancy of the underprivileged, those who lacked the prized Hellenic mind, which seems to stand for the ability to check emotions and possible insecurities. Consequently these underprivileged had to be guided by those who possessed this ability. F. Cumont's belief in the Senate's function as the protector of the *mos maiorum* followed in this vein[4]. Even A.D. Nock, discussing the arrival of new cults in Rome and following Polybius' judgment on Roman religion[5], seemed to hint at an emotional difference between the elite and other citizens[6].

A closer look at the mystery cults, especially those that have found full integration in the Roman religious system and concern us here, reveals that the Eleusian and Dionysiac mysteries provided the basic structure[7]. Thus, the Greeks supplied the model, not Persians or other Asians beyond the Graeco-Roman horizon. If one equates orient simply with east and takes Rome as the geographical center, then the origins of the deities like Cybele, Isis, Mithras, and Jupiter Dolichenus lay in the orient. Further, these deities had received an *interpretatio Romana*, occasionally preceded by an *interpretatio Graeca*, and so contained for an inhabitant of the Roman empire at least an acceptable and convincing amount of Roman style and spirit.

Another misconception is that oriental cults entered Rome at a time when the old, traditional religion was declining and gave way to new and exotic ones[8]. Was it not Sulla who had embraced an exotic deity, the Cappadocian Mâ-Bellona, and was it not under his dictatorship that a *collegium pastophorum* had been established in

---

[4] F. Cumont *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism* (Chicago, 1911).

[5] *Hist.* 6.56.

[6] A.D. Nock, *Conversion: the Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford, 1952), 67-8: "The State took over the responsibilities of individual citizens and freed them from *religio*, uneasy fear of the supernatural, an emotion always latent and liable from time to time to break out in panic. The attitude of the State toward individuals was exactly like the attitude then of the head of a household to its members." *The State* could easily be replaced by the leading citizens: the *patres* who as a body controlled the state and shaped Roman politics.

[7] Burkert (1987), 2.

[8] The first scholarly attempt to link the appeal of Isis among Romans with the decline of traditional religion was C. Reichel *De Isidis apud Romanos cultu* (Berlin, 1849).

Rome[9]? Did not the Roman Senate, the guardian of tradition and Roman religion, try to curb the cult of Isis in the 50's and 40's BCE but was as unsuccessful as Augustus and Tiberius would be later on? Emperors like Caligula, who had established a shrine to himself as a god[10] and apparently swore by his sister Drusilla's divinity[11], falls easily into the category of the 'irrational', the un-Hellenic, the utterly un-Roman, the un-traditional, as do Nero and Domitian, Commodus, and the Severi after him. In short, the triumphal advance of oriental religions could not be stopped. This type of conclusion presupposes an unshaken belief in the correctness and impartiality of the sources as well as the unrelenting application of the unwritten Roman moral code, the *mos maiorum*.

Juvenal's *iam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes*[12] comes to mind. F. Cumont's examination, which presented Italy and the western provinces as exceedingly orientalized, confirmed the satirist's claim[13]. Contrary to this, J. Toutain had concluded that the Egyptian deities had remained rather exotic[14], but the thought that Isiacism, propagated by eastern 'missionaries', spread uncontrollably was a much more appealing hypothesis. Roman religion was in decay and modern authors pointed to literary sources that would verify this claim. The elegists and Juvenal certainly furnished the proof that Isis attracted 'loose girls' and immoral Roman *matronae*. The connection

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[9] Apul., *Met.* 11.30: "rursus denique qua*qua raso* capillo collegii uetustissimi et sub illis Sullae temporibus conditi munia non obumbrato uel obtecto caluitio sed quoquouersus obuio gaudens obibam."

[10] Suet. *Cal.* 22.

[11] Suet. *Cal.* 24.

[12] *Sat.* 3.62.

[13] Cumont (1911).

[14] J. Toutain *Les cultes païens dans l'Empire romain* 2 vls. (Paris, 1911) used exclusively epigraphical material to examine the social standing and the ethnicity of the Isiac worshippers in the provinces. He determined that, especially in the Latin provinces, the main propagators had been administrative functionaries, military personnel, freedmen, slaves, and private citizens whose names suggest oriental descent. Toutain's work did not receive the necessary scholarly attention. A good reason for this is Cumont's reviews of Toutain's work in *RHR* 66 (1912), 125-9 and *RHR* 85 (1922), 88-91. More detail about the disagreement between the two scholars can be found in L. Vidman *Isis und Sarapis bei den Griechen und Römern. Epigraphische Studien zu den Trägern des ägyptischen Kultes, RGVV* 29 (Berlin, 1970), 112-4, and M. Malaise, "La diffusion des cultes égyptiens dans les provinces européennes de l'Empire romain," *ANRW* II 17.3 (Berlin and New York, 1984), 1623.

to the demi-monde was made and thought incontestably real and true[15].

Any religion with elaborate rituals and mysteries promising salvation and an afterlife would naturally help the politically and socially underprivileged escape the miseries of daily life. Combined with the belief that Christianity was the ultimate religion, i.e. the end of human religious development and reasoning, which conjectures a linear development of religion, the henotheistic mother goddess Isis with her divine companions marked the transition from the erroneous to the true religion. The pagan salvation religion of Isis had unwillingly prepared the population of the *imperium Romanum* for the coming of the true *soter* and made the rapid spread of Christianity possible. In this construct, Isis appealed to the depressed classes of the Roman empire, for the goddess knew what suffering meant. She was the sister/wife of a mortal and a resurrected god, and she gave the hope of an afterlife. In the end, however, the goddess could not rival Jesus Christ because the religion he had inspired soon developed a strong central organization, a systematic theology, and an acceptable monotheism[16].

One ought to remember though that this central Christian organization and the systematic Christian theology did not take on definite shape until the early Byzantine period. Further, all the Christological controversies demonstrate how long it took Christianity to find an acceptable form of monotheism, and that in a time when Christianity was the state religion! Christianity casts a long shadow but its form of monotheism should not be projected onto the henotheistic Isis. Cities like Alexandria and Ephesus show that Isiacs or adherents of any cult promising salvation (in the form of an afterlife) did not simply turn into Christians and forsake old convic-

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[15] I. Becher "Der Isiskult in Rom - ein Kult der Halbwelt?" *ZÄS* 96 (1970), 81-90 scrutinized the primary sources for this assertion. Her conclusion stands as a warning to all of us who comb through relevant literary works in search of infallible proofs for our scholarly constructs. ("An Ovid und den übrigen Zeugnissen wird deutlich, wie methodisch anfechtbar ein Herausheben einzelner Partien aus einer einzigen literarischen Gattung werden kann, wenn dazu noch die Einbettung in den Kontext übersehen wird und wenn die ausgehobenen Zeugnisse weder in die historische Situation gestellt noch mit Zeugnissen anderer Lebensbereiche konfrontiert werden. Der 'Dirnenkult' mancher Forscher ist ein Beweis dafür, daß bei geistes- und gesellschaftswissenschaftlichen Problemen nur eine umfassende Heranziehung aller verfügbaren Quellen eine gerechte Beurteilung ermöglicht, da im anderen Falle eine sachlich bedenkliche Verzerrung von Linien erfolgt, die das historische Bild entstellt.")

[16] R.E. Witt *Isis in the Greco-Roman World* (London, 1971).

tions. In proper pagan fashion, the cults co-existed up to the moment of active Christian intervention, which took the form of imperial edicts and, in the case of Alexandria, involved the physical destruction of temples honoring Isis and Sarapis.

2) Propagation and Adherence

V. Tran tam Tinh and M. Malaise addressed the question of the cult's propagators and convincingly showed that Italian merchants from Delos brought Isis to Campania[17]. Malaise's works have unmistakably proven that Delos was *the* additional link between Alexandria and Italy, and that Italian merchants brought the cult of Isis to Italy[18]. The utmost catalyst was the sack of the island in 88 BCE by Mithridates' general Archelaus. Employing epigraphical material and archaeological documents, Malaise conjectured that the Egyptian gods had found worshippers among the Italians and that their recruits were not exclusively found among foreigners[19]. Most adherents were of medium means. Leaders of municipalities, as

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[17] V. Tran tam Tinh *Essai sur le culte d'Isis à Pompéi* (Paris, 1964), *Le culte des divinités orientales à Herculaneum, EPRO* 15 (Leiden, 1971), and *Le culte des divinités orientales en Campanie en dehors de Pompéi, de Stabies et d'Herculaneum, EPRO* 27 (Leiden, 1972); M. Malaise *Les conditions de pénétration et de diffusion des cultes égyptiens en Italie, EPRO* 22 (Leiden, 1972) and Malaise (1984). A. Dewandel *Geschiedenis van den Isiscultus in het westersche romeinsche Rijk* (Leiden, 1941/2) suggested that merchants and orientals from Delos and Sicily played an important role in the propagation of the cult.

[18] Following Cumont, J. Baechler *Recherches sur la diffusion des cultes isiaques en Italie du IIe s. av. J.-C. au IIe s. ap. J.-C.* (Diss. Strasbourg, 1959) proposed that the first worshippers came directly from Alexandria to Italy. Their cult found adherents among orientals living in Italy, the municipal aristocracy, and the 'Roman high society' (pp. 166, 176). The orientals may have been motivated by a desire to embrace the home religion, a natural tendency, whereas for the other two groups it was a fad, which S. Morenz labeled 'Isissehnsucht' ("Ägyptische Nationalreligion und sogenannte Isismission," *Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 36 (1961), 432-6).

[19] Malaise (1984), 1629-31. According to his calculations, 43% of the adherents were Graeco-orientals, some of whom were Egyptians or Alexandrians. Commercial centers had the largest concentration. Among the *ingenui* there were only 15% of Graeco-oriental background, whereas in the class of freedmen and slaves 50% were of such ethnicity. Altogether there were as many *ingenui* as freedmen and slaves.

documentation from Pompeii shows, seem to have embraced these gods as well[20].

Scholars had previously credited traders and customs officials, mainly imperial freedmen and slaves, as the earliest propagators of the 'Egyptian' cults, since cities along important trade routes yield the most evidence for Isiac worship[21]. If one considers all epigraphical and literary sources without any analytical classification, participants of the cult of Isis were women, children, slaves, freedmen, traders, veterans, soldiers, officers, low and high municipal officials, and members of the imperial family; in short, adherents from all levels of society. In addition, a general survey based on these sources confirms that most of the cult's adherents were not citizens of Rome. Consequently, this inference suggests that 'Egyptian' as well as other 'oriental' cults attracted social *outsiders* since they provided a form of social integration by way of religion.

Unlike the general surveys, the epigraphical data from the areas along the Rhine and the Danube, for example, show that dedicators who named Isis and Sarapis in their inscriptions were to a large degree administrative employees and military officials. These men were delegated from the center of the empire to carry out Roman rule and exercise control in the periphery of Roman-held territory and functioned as carriers of Romanization. They were the active, living link between the center and the periphery.

Where does this leave women, who must have been attracted to a cult which readily accepted and integrated those who could not enjoy all the freedoms and rights the Roman society offered its male citizens? E. Guimet considered women next to freedmen to be the most captivated by Isis[22]. S. Heyob studied the women's issue exclusively[23]. She tried to prove that women "sought Isis out most eagerly to fill a need which the Greek and Roman religion failed to fill[24]". In other words, Isis' exceptionally outstanding female and

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[20] Malaise (1984), 1632: "A envisager le recrutement des fidèles sur le plan social, on constate donc qu'Isis, Sérapis et les dieux *sunnaoi* ont rassemblé autour de leurs autels des individus issus de différentes sphères, toutefois principalement originaires de la classe des esclaves, de celle des affranchis et des milieux commerçants et artisanaux."

[21] Correspondingly, Malaise (1984), 1651 has documented the spread of the cult along the water and land trade routes of the Rhône valley.

[22] "L'Isis romaine," *CRAI* 1896, 155-60.

[23] *The Cult of Isis among Women in the Graeco-Roman World*, *EPRO* 51 (Leiden, 1975).

[24] Heyob (1975), 80.

motherly characteristics attracted more women than other female Graeco-Roman deities with similar characteristics. However, examining the epigraphical material related to the cult of Isis, Heyob came to the conclusion that women did not form the majority of the cult's participants[25]. F. Mora confirmed once more that Heyob's working thesis could not be upheld in light of the epigraphical evidence. He calculated that the female participation in Danubian provinces, for example, was 16.5% and in the western provinces (Germania inferior and superior, Britannia, Gallia Narbonensis, and Hispania Tarraconensis) 29.5%[26]. Ross Kraemer's feminist critique, intended to help Heyob's assumption along, and her employment of M. Douglas' grid/group model, which correlates specific beliefs and practices with specific and measurable social experiences, fail to extract more supporting evidence from the existing primary sources[27].

General studies are easily marred by misconceptions, doubtless because of their immense scope. Resulting discussions and closer examinations generally remain at the point of departure or at the surface of the problem broached. Most unfortunate is the fact that too many authors have uncritically adopted intellectual constructs of earlier scholars, though some were mere *argumenta ad hominem*. L. Vidman, who has distinguished himself as a formidable collator of and authority on all inscriptions related to Isis and Sarapis found in the Roman world[28], still provides the best general discussions of the cult of Isis and Sarapis in the Graeco-Roman world[29].

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[25] Heyob (1975), 81.

[26] F. Mora *Prosopografia Isiaca*, 2 vls., *EPRO* 113 (Leiden, 1990) based his calculation on all the available inscriptions that range from the third century BCE to the third and fourth century CE. A range of nearly 700 years without some comparative qualifications, for example, social and religious background of the areas, sets excessively wide parameters. Mora, approaching the topic of female participation anew, did not consider examining inscriptions related to other female goddesses with Isiac characteristics from areas and time periods relevant to his study and comparing them with those dedicated to Isis. Critique on Heyob's thesis, vol. 2, 113.

[27] *Her Share of the Blessings* (1992), 13-21 (Discussion of Douglas' group/grid model) and 71-9 (Women's Devotion to the Egyptian Goddess Isis).

[28] Vidman *Sylloge inscriptionum religionis Isiacae et Sarapiacae, RGVV* 28 (Berlin, 1969) inspired by A. Salač and his work *Isis, Sarapis a božstva sdružená dle svědectví řeckých a latinských nápisů* (Isis, Sarapis and the sunnaoi theoi in Greek and Latin Inscriptions) (Prague, 1915).

[29] L. Vidman, "Die Isis- und Sarapisverehrung im 3. Jahrhundert unserer Zeit," *Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der alten Welt* II. Römisches Reich, (Berlin,

3) The Question of Belief

Roman religion is the sum of all cults, mystery and non-mystery, directed at deities that had a place in the Roman, i.e. Graeco-Roman, pantheon. Following this definition, the term 'mystery religion' can only be used when the worshipped deity did not have a place in this pantheon; otherwise, the term mystery cult has to be employed. G. Wissowa already suggested with the title of his monumental work *Religion und Kultus der Römer*[30] that these terms (*religio* and *cultus*), which overlap in their meaning, need to be differentiated. Here, short definitions seem in order for two reasons. First, they will shed some light on the religious belief system of the Romans and reveal how they comprehended their world. Only a proper understanding of their intellectual awareness will allow us to understand the behavior of the elite toward Isis and Sarapis. Second, they will help distinguish between mystery religions and mystery cults, two expressions that are mistakenly used interchangeably.

The relationship between a human being and a deity or deities finds its manifestation in the form of religion. A cult is the system of a specific ritual and prayers for a single deity or a set of deities necessary to keep this relationship intact. In Roman eyes, this relationship was reciprocal and guided by *pietas*[31]. Cults fulfilled a social purpose. They bound people together and gave each individual 'a place' in society. Unlike cults restricted to certain families, clans, or classes, mystery cults were open. Individuals selected them freely. The initiate would not only experience the sacred but also be integrated into a religious system that provided an additional dimension to a person's social station and could furnish emotional security[32].

1965), 389-400, "Träger des Isis- und Sarapiskultes in den römischen Provinzen," *Eirene* 5 (1966), 107-16, *Isis und Sarapis bei den Griechen und Römern. Epigraphische Studien zu den Trägern des ägyptischen Kultes, RGVV* 29 (Berlin, 1970), and "Isis und Sarapis," in ed. M. Vermaseren *Die orientalischen Religionen im Römerreich, EPRO* 93 (Leiden, 1981), 121-56.

[30] (München, 1902). Useful discussion are F. Pfister, "Religion," *RE* 11 (Stuttgart, 1922), especially 2107-10, M. Kobbert, "Kult," *RE* Zweite Reihe 1.2 (Stuttgart, 1914), 563-83, and R. Turcan's *Religion romaine*, vol. 1: *Les dieux* and vol. 2: *Le culte* (Leiden and New York, 1988).

[31] J. Scheid *Religion et piété à Rome* (Paris, 1985).

[32] Burkert (1987), 11 and 17.

As an answer to the question why foreign (i.e. non-Roman and non-Italic) cults entered Rome, social and emotional reasons seem very plausible and convincing explanations. The introduction of the cult of Cybele (Magna Mater) serves as test case. Foreign cults seem to have entered Rome at times of great social upheaval, i.e. when wars or internal struggles weakened the structure of society. Individuals, having lost, losing, or simply fearing the loss of their societal position, sought new or additional belief patterns since the old ones had proved insufficient. Anxiety and, ultimately, fear are basic elements of human existence and always trigger an immediate response to reestablish the *status quo ante*. In this, society as a whole does not act differently from the individual.

In the case of the cult of Cybele, the time of sociopolitical stress coincided with the time of Rome's geographical expansion that brought with it an exposure to other cultures and ideologies. Once exposed, whole systems or singular patterns would work their way into the Roman fabric[33]. Although political conditions forced an official introduction of the cult of Cybele, its origin was neither outside Rome's cultural and ideological horizon nor its sphere of interest[34]. This cult, as others after it, had been part of the Hellenistic world which Rome had 'inherited.' Further, the Roman ability and readiness to accept and integrate foreign ideas and cults was linked with the all-encompassing notion of the *pax deorum*. Roman control of geographical areas entailed acceptance of the area's deities. Since inclusiveness marked Roman paganism, the Roman pantheon contained indigenous as well as foreign deities. They could co-exist or fuse. The belief in the *pax deorum* and the resulting *pax hominum* encouraged this inclusiveness or openness. This also explains the uniquely Roman *euocatio*, the integration of deities of conquered peoples. And, military success, i.e. the successful acquisition of *imperium*, could be used to prove that the gods stood

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[33] D.H., *Ant. Rom.* 2.19.3 speaks of "the influx into Rome of innumerable 'nations' which are under every necessity of worshipping their ancestral gods according to the customs of their respective countries, yet the city has never officially adopted any of those foreign practices (...)." The exception is the cult of Cybele, for it had been introduced "in pursuance of oracles." Cult adherents did not wait for official introduction. The *pomerium*, the religious boundary of a city, was not an impenetrable line. Certainly exposure to so many different 'nations' and their way of life must have rubbed off on Romans of all classes and not only on the 'boorish' *plebs*.

[34] E. Gruen *Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy*, *Cincinnati Classical Studies*, New Series vol. 7 (Leiden, 1990), 73.

on Rome's side. In other words, simple patterns of linear causality shaped a Roman's world, i.e. the understanding of the world as a row of singular causes and effects[35].

New deities and cults could be accommodated in the already existing system but, theoretically, they needed to be approved by the leading political institution, the Senate or the emperor, before they could be brought inside the *pomerium* of Rome. On the one hand, this was not more than another religious ritual but, on the other hand, it clearly shows the sociopolitical control mechanism at work. A religion that had already attracted so many worshippers and forced the Senate to introduce it officially would have flourished further without the state's blessing. Ultimately, it would have undermined the existing religious system and disrupted social structures that guaranteed the social and political status quo. New attractive religions had to and could be integrated into the existing system but had to be brought under official supervision in order to preserve the existing order in Rome and, by extension, in the urbanized and Romanized areas of the empire.

The official introduction of the mystery religion of Cybele in 204 BCE[36] and the senatorial decree against the Bacchanalia in 186 BCE[37] show not only the state procedure at work, but they also show that the traditional Roman cultic actions could no longer satisfy every citizen's or inhabitant's need for belonging[38]. The *polis* Rome had simply outgrown itself. The relationship between individual and state had changed and was still changing.

The second war with Carthage over the hegemonial supremacy of the western Mediterranean (218-202 BCE), the problems with the Gauls in the north, and the wrangling with Philip V in the East (214-205 BCE) left the Roman citizenry and the inhabitants of Roman held territory economically and socially in dire distress. Bonds between family members were severed, the relationship between individual and state was strained, and, as a result, the traditional religious ties became extremely fragile and easily replaceable by new, unconventional ones. Military success that would restore the

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[35] The best example of such thinking can be found in Voltaire's *Candide*.

[36] Lucr. 2. 624 and D. H. *Ant. Rom.* 2.19.3-5.

[37] Liv. 39.8-18; *CIL* I 196 = *ILS* 18.

[38] Good introductions to the vast bibliography on Cybele and the Bacchanalia are B.M. Metzger, "A Classified Bibliography of the Graeco-Roman Mystery Religion 1924-1973 with a Supplement 1974-1977," *ANRW* II 17.3 (Berlin and New York, 1984), 1280-7 (Cybele), 1314-16 (Bacchanalia), and Gruen (1990), 193-203.

slipping status quo to its former standing depended on a cohesive citizenry. The Senate introduced various military measures as well as a religious one. The political elite, thus emphasizing its superior role in the state, allowed Magna Mater to come inside the *pomerium*. This official, public, and magnificent recognition restored the *pax deorum* and *Romanorum*. In other words, the traditional bonds between leader and led had been visibly and successfully reforged.

The senatorial decree against the Bacchanalia, a cult that was widespread in southern Italy before it came to Rome, shows that any possible threat to the traditional status quo and ideology, whose custodian was the Senate, would force a reaction from the body of the sociopolitical and economic elite. The state's external and, consequently, internal situation seemed secure. The Romans had successfully stopped Antiochus III's advances two years before the Senate's repression of the *orgia*. The victory over the Seleucid Antiochus sealed Rome's supreme position in the Mediterranean area. The world of the Romans and, therefore, of the gods was in order. The Roman Senate saw no reason to allow these orgiastic activities inside the City. Its refusal had nothing to do with moral scruples, it was simply a question of traditional rights, social order, and political power[39].

Senatorial repression led to crime waves and the social order of the capital gave way to disorder. Thus, the symptom, the arrival of the Bacchanalia in Rome, had given way to the real reason, the outdated and insufficient *polis* construct[40]. This reason, however, had never been a part of a Roman analysis. The Senate's traditional task was to keep the traditional social bonds and, by extension, the state structure intact. It did so by executing its constitutional power. Since the senatorial elite found itself in a sound and unchallenged position, the ensuing crime waves did not force any compromise from their side. Although the Bacchanalia did not receive official recognition and so the right to be inside the *pomerium*, the cult remained popular.

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[39] J.-M. Pailler *Bacchanalia. La répression de 186 av. J.-C. à Rome et en Italie; vestiges, images, tradition*, *Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome*, vol. 270 (Rome, 1988) and J. Scheid, "The Religious Roles of Roman Women," in *A History of Women. From Ancient Goddess to Christian Saints*, ed. P. Schmitt Pantel and trans. A. Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA and London, 1992), 398-400.

[40] This encompassed social, political, economic, and religious aspects.

The record of the introduction of the Bacchanalia portrays the Senate as a cohesive institution trying to uphold the traditional Roman way of life in contrast to asocial women and the brutish and emotional *plebs* that could not see past their own desires and never had the good of the state at heart[41]. This is simply a distortion that ignores social and political conditions. That religion itself had become a mechanism with which one could control the masses was not only clear to Polybius but also known among Rome's political leaders. Q. Mucius Scaevola spoke of "three types of gods that had been handed down: one from the poets, one from the philosophers, and a third from the leaders of the state" and "only the third type was beneficial for the people, and it was expedient to deceive them in matters of religion[42]." Cicero's words to his brother concerning his augurship or Cato's description of two smirking augurs give, just as Scaevola's comment, poignant evidence that some of the elite performed public religious rituals without really 'believing' in them and that public 'religion' was, ultimately, an effective and wonderful instrument of power with which one could deceive, and ultimately control, the masses[43].

Roman intellectuals of the Late Republic probed the meaning and purpose of religion. Like Scaevola they grasped differences and understood the political relevance of religion. In the end though even those who contemplated could not escape the system through which and by which their *being* was defined. Queries about religion and questions about the existence of deities did not lead to an abandonment of rituals. Questioners and simple folk alike were bound by tradition, the *mos maiorum* (especially *pietas*), and faced with a

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[41] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford, 1979), 60: "Religion is unemotional. Emotional religion, particularly when kindled in the masses, is objectionable and dangerous and among foreigners a sign of barbarism."

[42] Aug. *C.D.* 4.27. L. Ross Taylor *Party Politics at the Time of Caesar* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1949), 77: "It is possible that this statement is to be attributed not to Quintus Scaevola, consul of 95, but to his father Publius, consul of 133 and also pontifex maximus." F. Münzer, "Mucius," *RE* 31.2 (Stuttgart, 1933), no. 17, 425-8 and no. 22, 437-46.

[43] Karl Marx's notion that religion was opium for the people and Emile Zola's that the church had enslaved populations comes from the belief that religion numbs the mind and leads to political exploitation be it by the state or the church that in some cases is the state in disguise. This is not very different from Quintus or Publius Mucius Scaevola's notion, and it would not be surprising if both 19th century authors would have remembered Scaevola from their reading of Augustine or their religious instruction.

tangible end product of appropriate behavior, the actuality of *imperium*. Or, in other words, as long as the original cosmic frame of reference that defined Roman society was operative, there could be no profound change. Augustus, who brought social stability to (civil) war-torn Rome, reactivated ancient cults. Whether he believed in the deities whose worship he promulgated or not has no relevance. Like the Livian Numa he understood that *disciplina* was crucial for the *salus publica* and that *religio* could provide it. The underlying mythological, albeit actual, understanding was that Rome was founded *auspicio augurioque*, which generated a contract between Rome and Jupiter, and that binary reciprocal mechanisms were at work, the relationship between the divine and the human sphere and the *senatus populusque*.

As distinct from modern religions, the primary purpose of the traditional Roman religion was not to satisfy emotional needs, although they could be fulfilled during cultic actions, but the maintenance of a favorable reciprocal relationship between gods and humans. Only the observance of prescribed rituals and their proper implementation guaranteed the *pax deorum* and, in return, the *pax hominum* or, more correctly, *Romanorum*. Even members of the Roman elite, who were skeptical of gods, kept up the traditional worship and competed for priesthoods. To them, there was nothing hypocritical about such behavior. They continued to adhere to the essential principle of the *do ut des*, and showed proper reverence by exactly following the prescribed rituals. Rome's senatorial elite had a monopoly on priesthoods as it did on political office. The introduction of the *Augustales*, for example, changed this custom in only one aspect. It gave affluent freedmen the chance to set themselves apart from the mass of non-Roman citizens and to do this within the traditional political and religious framework. In a society in which politics and religion were intertwined, in which religious offices were held by the affluent and/or the sociopolitically mighty, political and religious propaganda were one and the same. It aimed at the successful binding of all areas and inhabitants to the political and religious center: Rome and its human counterpart, the Senate, and later the emperor.

Roman *homines religiosi* ought not to be confused with their Christian counterparts. An unconditional expression of *credo* was not a part of Roman *religio*. There was no theology to that effect[44]. In

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[44] One could, of course, argue for J. Linderski's definition found in "Roman Religion in Livy," in ed. W. Schuller *Livius, Aspekte seines Werkes, Konstanzer*

comparison to other things Rome might be equal or even inferior, but in light of religion, argues the Stoic Lucilius Balbus in Cicero's *De natura deorum*, the Romans are far superior[45]. The Romans were the *religiosissima gens* whose *imperium* was proof thereof[46]. Polybius had noted and evaluated the nature of Rome's religious convictions. Labeling them superstitions, he thought them adopted for the sake of the common people in order to keep the state system intact. The multitude with its "lawless desires, unreasoned passions, and violent anger" was controlled by "invisible terrors[47]." A simple strategy indeed. We should not pass over the fact that Polybius also stated "that it was the nobles who held office and therefore they were the people who kept their oaths and abstained from public wrong[48]." Liebeschuetz noted the contradiction that "nobility itself was affected by fear of the gods notwithstanding that they were supposed to have invented the whole business to cow the common people[49]."

This contradiction, however, is sociologically explainable. In essence, there exists a dialectical relationship between the creators of culture (women and men) and their creation (culture) whose products they are. Society, the web of human interactions and interrelations, is a non-material component of culture. "Religion legitimates social institutions by bestowing upon them an ultimately valid ontological status, that is, by *locating* them within a sacred and cosmic frame of reference[50]." Thus, religious rituals remind society of its ontological definition and legitimation. They also link the changing present with a constant, i.e. the timeless sacred and cosmic frame of reference.

The absence of a body of doctrines about the deities or the divine, and the fact that paganism did not deal with personal and social

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Althistorische Vorträge und Forschungen, Xenia 31 (1993), 55, where "the essence of Roman state theology" is that "[t]he gods exist, they are on the Roman side, and the proof of this is victory."

[45] 2.8.6-9.1: "et si conferre volumus nostra cum externis, ceteris rebus aut pares aut etiam inferiores reperimur, religione id est cultu deorum multo superiores."

[46] Cic. *N.D.* 2.3 (8).

[47] *Hist.* 6.56.1-11. For a discussion see Liebeschuetz (1979), 4-5.

[48] *Hist.* 6.56.14.

[49] Liebeschuetz (1979), 5.

[50] P. Berger *The Sacred Canopy. Elements of Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York, 1969), 33.

ethics that would bring on a special doctrinal set gave the system this openness. Paganism was based on the *do ut des* principle, which nicely reflects the reciprocal relationship between humanity and the gods. In the pagan belief structure gods and humans formed one reciprocally shaped and guided community in which the one could not exist without the other[51]. Basically, pagan religion was the binding of humans to deities based on mutual respect. Humans would actively and properly venerate deities, i.e. perform the cults, and the gods, in turn, would provide the individual or the society with that which had been requested.

The veneration of a deity could take place in public or among the family, be open to everybody or only to the initiated. The exact observance of the prescribed ritual was the key element in addressing a divinity. Only the proper invocation and actions guaranteed divine benevolence, which would be visually revealed. In the minds of Romans this benevolence could only be maintained with the cults that had proven to be effective, i.e. the older the cult, all the more reliable and effective to bring about the desired effect. Even if elements, for example words, movements, and tokens, had lost their meaning over the centuries, they could not be exchanged or eliminated lest the cult's power, its magic, should be lost and, consequently, its spell broken[52]. This is true for any cult or religion. In the case of the Isiac cult this meant that the most important cultic *formulae* were uttered in Egyptian. This had nothing to do with the cult's inability or the priests' refusal to be Romanized or the inability of Romans to withstand the Egyptian lure[53].

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[51] Cic. *Leg.* 1.23 and Varro ap. Aug. *CD.* 6.2.

[52] Liebeschuetz (1979), 35: "Roman life was accompanied by innumerable ritual acts, each of which had to be accompanied by precisely the right form of words. The implication is that words have power. This implication may be rejected by the wisest as far as their individual beliefs are concerned, but collectively all men have always had confidence in the power of words, even though sometimes unaware of it. Belief in the power of religious words was maintained by a complex of feelings, aesthetic, associational, and even empirical, the sense that Rome had fared well while these formulae had been used. But the outcome must have been an open-mindedness towards the possibility of practices that sought to move matter at a distance through a combination of words and gestures."

[53] A good example of such a misunderstanding is Vidman's comment (1971), 169: "(...) die ersten zwei Kaiser waren große Gegner des ägyptischen Kultes. Auch darin kann man vielleicht einen Grund für die geringe Romanisierung sehen. Als dann die anderen Kaiser, vor allem Caligula, die Flavier und Hadrian den Kult zu fördern begannen, waren sie dem ägyptischen Einfluß selbst so ausgesetzt, daß sie fast nichts typisch Römisches in den Kult bringen konnten. Natürlich mag dabei

Pietas demanded from the Romans timely performance of prescribed cults and so Roman religion shaped daily life and social behavior. A Roman could be initiated into various cults and worship as many gods as he wanted. If one god failed to help, maybe another one would. There was no conflict of interest. The inclusiveness of the polytheistic system made it possible. Cultic interests of teachers, family members, or relatives did not necessarily bring about conversion in others. The necessity of conversion is a Christian phenomenon and not part of the inclusive polytheistic religious system. Poppaeus Habitus (a cousin of Poppaea Sabina, Nero's second wife), for example, had a *lararium* in which Isis, Osiris, Harpocrates, and Anubis were depicted[54]. The combination of these deities with the Roman *lares* is another good example of the fact that these gods had basically the same characteristics. Being sympathetic to these characteristics does not mean that a person would join the cult of Isis. Poppaea's second husband, M. Salvius Otho, emperor for three months in 69, was an initiate[55]. The fact that he was an Isiac in no way hindered his political career, nor did it influence his wife or his friend, Nero.

Rome had expanded and become the supreme power in the Mediterranean but its state apparatus had not been changed. The organization of power had remained the same as that of a *polis*. Social problems 'manifested' themselves but were not recognized as such because the system was still able to 'cure' itself. The conquerors who had been conquered, to paraphrase Horace, found among the newly encountered worlds alternatives to the traditional form of religion since sociopolitical and economic turmoil had called into question the 'success' on which Roman religious loyalty was based. The conquerors found new ways of looking at the world, new artistic stimuli, and intellectual challenges. Some found Greek philosophy; others, new deities. But, whatever they found, their interest turned the newly-encountered, the peripheral, into an integral part of the Roman *Gedankenwelt*[56]. 'Foreign' cults found adherents among the Roman

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auch die kleinere schöpferische Potenz der Römer und die allgemeine Situation mitgespielt haben. Die Griechen, die zur hellenistischen Zeit noch im vollen schöpferischen Elan waren, formten die ägyptische Religion, die noch entwicklungsfähig war, um."

[54] Malaise (1972), 84 and 404.

[55] Suet. *Otho* 12.

[56] The German word has a broader and yet more specific meaning than its English equivalent *world of ideas*.

and non-Roman inhabitants of the empire not because the religious attitude of the people had changed and they were 'in search of higher spirituality,' but because the sociopolitical conditions made it possible to find acceptable alternatives. Cults would satisfy the most common human search for the purpose of being and one's place in the cosmos.

Alternatives to the existing possibilities will always fit into the existing intellectual/religious system. So does the question about an afterlife. It is only an extension of the question of life and as such part of the most essential and oldest theme in the discussion of *being*. There is simply nothing exotic about a cult or a religion, for all address this issue in one way or another. The idea of spirituality is bound to the idea of evolutionary grades in religions, i.e. the more encompassing one god, the higher the religious spirituality. Consequently, a god that is omnipotent and omnipresent extracts the highest degree of spirituality from his believers for he is the sum, the abstraction and source, of all. The conclusion that pagans were in search of higher spirituality is based on this notion. The cult of Isis, for example, becomes then the link between the utterly pagan world and the Christian world whose own spirituality, its philosophical superstructure, had to be consciously developed. Julian the Apostate's measures were the last good reason to do so quickly.

4) Aspects and Goals

Three issues will form the underlying themes of this study: first, the integration of the cult of Isis among Roman cults, second, the political employment of Isis and Sarapis independent of their cultic context, and, third, their function in the Rhine and Danubian provinces. The first two discussions will focus on the religious policies toward Isis and Sarapis that have prompted the transformation of the Hellenized Egyptian deities into gods of the Roman state. A survey of the senatorial policies of the Late Republic and those of the Julio-Claudians toward the cult forms the starting point. It will be shown that political, not religious or moral, scruples at first forced Rome's leading politicians to reject these deities; later other political circumstances encouraged their official acceptance and integration.

Three Augustan actions, the institutionalization of emperor worship, the deification of Julius Caesar (the beginning of the line of the *diui imperatores*), and the carefully directed employment of

images and signs[57], introduced and propagated ideological concepts that not only shaped Rome's political world but also prepared the successful integration of Isis and Sarapis. The systematic propagation of the notion of the emperor as the central social, political, and religious force of the state set him apart from all the other inhabitants of the empire. The dynamic of this was that each subsequent emperor could place himself among gods more easily than his predecessor and thus ask for the appropriate treatment. An emperor was a *diui filius*, whether he succeeded a deified *princeps* or not, and whether he propagated this fact or not. Hence, the emperor gradually became the living myth that furnished the structure for Rome's political life.

Two issues require additional scrutiny, first, the transformation of Isis and Sarapis from personal to Roman state gods and, second, Isis and, especially, Sarapis as religious prototypes that propagated an understanding of the *princeps* as a human being beyond normal conventions. In this their function is similar to that of the cult of the emperor. Although on a much smaller scale, they were a decisive element in the binding of the periphery to the center or, in other words, the inhabitants of the *imperium Romanum* to the ruler.

Symbols or signs, such as imperial statues, coins, buildings, rituals, and ceremonies to point out only a few, continuously reinforced the importance of the center. A. Alföldi was the first to link Isiac symbols to Roman politics and propagation of ideas. This he did in a short article entitled "Isiskult und Umsturzbewegung im letzten Jahrhundert der römischen Republik[58]." Although I do not agree with his conclusion that the subaltern personnel working the mint was "an always battle-ready revolutionary vanguard of Isiacs" ("stets kampfbereite revolutionäre Stoßgruppe der Isiaci") and inserted Isiac symbols, without consulting the moneyer in charge, to further a socio-revolutionary mass movement, the appearance of Isiac symbols on coins of the Late Republic points to an awareness or even an interest among the senatorial class in the symbolism connected with the goddess Isis. In contrast to Roman deities, Isis and other so-called 'oriental' gods offered a "cosmic coherence that assigned a place to each individual in the world and revealed the functioning of the universe." As every one of these gods could singularly regulate the workings of the universe, so did the emperor govern the terrestrial sphere, and it was only a question of time for the living

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[57] P. Zanker *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro (Ann Arbor, 1988).

[58] Alföldi (1954).

god to manifest himself and to find acceptance. Emperors like Gaius (Caligula), Nero, Domitian, Commodus, and Caracalla enhanced with their ruling style the notion of the emperor as operating in the intermediate sphere between the terrestrial and celestial and, at the same time, advanced with their despotic attitude a duplication of the Ptolemaic ruler concept. The processes Alföldi envisioned for the Late Republic are applicable to the well-established Principate.

The cult of Isis advanced in the first half of the first century CE to a *sacrum publicum* and received an officially sanctioned residence in the *campus Martius*. Sarapis played an essential part in Vespasian's ascent to power. It was the first connection of an emperor with Sarapis outside the specific cultic context and as such capable of development. On the one hand, the cult of Isis had become a component of the Roman religion, which was a votive religion; on the other hand, Isis and Sarapis were associated with the imperial couple and the *domus Augusta*. In both cases inscriptions served as a means of expressing personal devotion either to the deities alone or in connection with rulers who stressed such a link. With the deities' gradual transformation into state deities came a successively politicized employment. The emperor, who occupied the state's most central position, embodied the state. Augustus' signs and symbols propagated this fact, and the whole imperial ideology aimed at binding the state to the *princeps*, the monarch. In the religious sphere, the cult of the emperor was the prime religious expression, the cultivation and perpetual enforcement, of this reality. This world structure with a monarch in the center matched the divine, henotheistic world of Isis. Consequently, the binding and eventual fusion of the divine with the imperial couple was only a question of time. Rome's sociopolitical reality, a world in which religion and politics were firmly intertwined, had prepared the way.

The placing of monuments with inscriptions in honor of Isis and Sarapis by administrators or military officials in border areas had both a religious and a political meaning. These monuments symbolized the existing link between the center and the periphery. Simultaneously, they visually expressed the acceptance of Roman values and propagated them. Since Flavian times, when the process of binding Isis and Sarapis to the *domus Augusta* began, the cult inadvertently acquired a political function. Isis and Sarapis, who reflected the existing world order in the divine sphere, inherently justified the imperial claim of supreme authority and power. Thus, even a dedication of a private person to Isis and Sarapis solely intended as a votive would lastly incorporate this dimension.

Distinct from imperial worship, which endowed its priests, the *Augustales*, with a recognizable social distinction, the cult of Isis and Sarapis did not do so. And yet, one person could reap a political advantage: the emperor. This cult, like the cult of the emperor and other Roman cults, was a component of imperial religious propaganda. The goal was to bind all inhabitants to the person of the emperor in order to maintain Augustus' political creation. In the first part of this study I will focus on Republican and imperial behavior and policies toward the cult of Isis and Sarapis. I hope to show that the actions against the cult were politically motivated and happened at a time of social uncertainty. Its official acceptance and integration stand in contrast. It took place when the political form of the Principate stood firmly and guaranteed social stability.

The third theme of this study focuses on the function of Isis and Sarapis in the Rhine and Danubian provinces. It is in these areas that we find the highest degree of veneration of oriental gods that have received an *interpretatio Romana*[59]. G. Alföldy has studied the epigraphical material from the western provinces and calculated that names of all oriental deities do not comprise more than 10% of all deities mentioned on votive monuments, expressed as an average of all these provinces combined. Pannonia shows one of the highest occurrences at 14%[60]. U. Kahrstedt calculated the same percentage for Roman Germany[61]. These numbers, even if they only count worshippers who publicly professed their devotion by putting up votive inscriptions on imperishable material, reveal that oriental deities were far from being extensively venerated.

The Rhine and Danube marked not only the Roman frontier, but they also served as important trade routes. The frontier concept touches on the question of the integration of peripheral areas and, consequently, their subordinate relationship to the administrative and religious center: Rome. A trademark of this relationship is Romanization. The trade routes point to an important issue concerning the propagation of the cult of Isis and Sarapis, for an area had to be Romanized in order for the cult to be smoothly integrated.

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[59] W. Schenk, "Interpretatio Graeca - Interpretatio Romana. Der hellenistische Synkretismus als semiotisches Problem," in *Innovationen in Zeichentheorien*, eds. P. Schmitter and H.W. Schmitz (Münster, 1989), 83-121

[60] "Die Krise des Imperium Romanum und die Religion Roms," in *Religion und Gesellschaft in der römischen Kaiserzeit, Kölner Historische Abhandlungen* 35 (1989), 74.

[61] *Kulturgeschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Bern, ²1958), 383.

Since surviving records pertaining to the cult of Isis and Sarapis have been found predominantly in areas or locations with a traceable history of Roman presence, the propagation of the cult and its gods has to be discussed in the context of Romanization and its consequence: urbanization. The concept 'Romanization' needs to be explored at this point, since proof of an area's Romanization can be anything from pottery shards to the remains of an elaborate Roman city[62]. The quantity and quality of physicals remains determined the degree of Romanization. Romanization, however, also had an ideological aspect; namely, the acceptance of Roman values, the *mos maiorum*, and its *Weltanschauung* (conceptualization of the world). In addition, a discussion about Romanization entails urbanization, particularly since urban centers played an essential role in Rome's domination over territories. Also, according to ancient understanding, civilized life could only take place in an urban context[63], or, as M. I. Finley stated, "the Graeco-Roman world was a world of cities," and "civilized life was thinkable only in and because of cities[64]."

An ancient urbanized area, a city, consisted of a city core, marked by architectural structures, and the adjacent countryside[65].

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[62] A short but pertinent evaluation of the term provided A. Mócsy *Gesellschaft und Romanisation in der römischen Provinz Moesia Superior* (Amsterdam and Budapest, 1970), 7. He concluded: "Da der Terminus selbst in der Antike unbekannt war, (...) werden geschichtliche Prozesse, die doch verdienten, eingehender untersucht zu werden, einfach unter einen Sammelbegriff zusammengefaßt und daher verhüllt." Another useful discussion of *Romanization* and *urbanization* is G. Alföldy's in "Römisches Städtewesen auf der neukatilischen Hochebene," *Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, phil.-hist. Klasse (1987), 22-30. Helpful arguments can also be found in *City and Country in the Ancient World*, eds. J. Rich and A. Wallace-Hadrill (London and New York, 1991).

[63] Even Tertullian credited the pagan Rome for its civilizing achievement when he exclaimed *ubique res publica, ubique uita* (*de An.* 30).

[64] M.I. Finley, "The Ancient City: From Fustel de Coulanges to Max Weber and Beyond," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19 (1977), 305. See also G. Alföldy, "Stadt, Land und raumordnende Bestrebungen im römischen Weltreich," in *Die römische Gesellschaft, HABES* 1 (Stuttgart, 1986), 212-38, W. Dahlheim, "Die Funktion der Stadt im römischen Herrschaftsverband," in *Stadt und Herrschaft. Römische Kaiserzeit und Hohes Mittelalter*, ed. F. Vittinghoff *HZ* Beiheft 7 (München, 1982), 15-74 and F. Vittinghoff, "Zur Entwicklung der städtischen Selbstverwaltung - einige kritische Anmerkungen," in Vittinghoff (1982), 107-146.

[65] Strabo formulated it in the following way: "(...) barbarians would become civilized as soon as they settled down to agricultural and therefore urban life (4.1.5)." See also H. Galsterer, "Stadt und Territorium," in Vittinghoff (1982),

Thus, a city's population fell into two groups, the rural and the urban inhabitants. Since tradition dictated that one's sociopolitical status depended on ownership of land, the affluent invested their wealth in it. These landowners, the wealthiest urban residents, shaped local politics, and their competition, integrated into the political system, advanced a city's infrastructure and encouraged its beautification; or, in other words, brought about urbanization. Furthermore, this competition fostered the conquest of new territory, and stimulated colonization as well as the development of already existing indigenous towns.

Military and administrative presence guaranteed Rome's dominance over conquered areas. This presence meant an introduction of the Roman political, economic, and juridical system as well as its culture into the periphery. This, in return, reinforced and ensured the center's dominant position. Colonization, the transplantation of Roman citizens to newly annexed areas, and the reward of the title *municipium* for an indigenous urban center, whose citizens excelled in adopting Roman values and its way of life, advanced Rome's predominance. Cities were built according to a Roman plan and beautified according to Roman taste; they turned out to be copies, no matter how small, of Rome. The same applied to the administration of a peripheral city and its social composition. Colonies, indigenous towns, and, especially, garrisons functioned as buffer zones along the frontier. While they enforced the notion of occupation, they also enhanced Roman culture. Economically, peripheral cities were self-sufficient and could be taxed. Part of the taxes flowed back to Rome, fueled the capital's economy and reinforced the system[66]. Soldiers, paid by taxes, amplified and protected, offensively or defensively, the Roman way of life and its economic and sociopolitical systems. Annexation introduced Roman or Romanized people into peripheral

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[66] K. Hopkins, "Taxes and Trade in the Roman Empire," *JRS* 70 (1980), 101-25. The author's various proposals suggest that Rome's economy was much more sophisticated than generally assumed. The monetary flow was circular and not in the first instance directed at and distributed from Rome. Further, trade was not only evenly spread empire-wide but had also reached a highly advanced level for the society.

areas and promoted urbanization, which was the most essential by-product of Romanization[67].

The state envisioned as a body or a pyramidical abstraction can also be pictured as an accumulation of concentric circles with the elite forming the center. This center accommodates and manipulates values, beliefs, traditions, and signs that then govern society as a whole[68]. Signs, such as rituals, ceremonies, buildings, coins, and religious, social, juridical, and administrative mechanisms found in Rome were introduced or reproduced in the provinces. Thus the center's importance was not only reinforced but the link between the capital and the individual in the periphery of the empire was also strengthened. In short, the center and the periphery were bonded[69]. In Republican Rome, the senatorial elite formed the group of custodians of these signs and mechanisms only to be replaced by the emperors. Hence the content of the center changed but its form as well as its various signs and mechanisms remained essentially the same.

Meaningful changes of symbols, additions or enlargements, could only take place when a basic understanding of a sign's content, which is, in essence, a learned recognition, existed. This becomes important when one thinks of one of the smallest carriers of Roman symbols, namely, emblems on coins. Coins carry political information or themes of propaganda in symbolic form[70]. Although less than spectacular, they are enduring[71]. A symbol, or in semiotic terms, a symbolic representation of a sign, can only be understood by those who share the same belief structure and can connect the

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[67] Important discussions that provide food for thought are, in addition to Finley (1977), K. Hopkins, "Economic Growth and Towns in Classical Antiquity," in *Towns in Society*, eds. Ph. Abrams and E.A. Wrigley (Cambridge, 1978), 35-77 and F. Vittinghoff, "'Stadt' und Urbanisierung in der griechisch-römischen Antike," *HZ* 226 (1978), 547-63. P. Ørsted *Roman Imperial Economy and Romanization* (Copenhagen, 1985), 14, provides a definition of urbanization: "The fully developed city had a number of institutions devoted to administering this community: *comitia*, *magistratus*, a political system, common cults, and an administration of the *vectigalia*, *ultro tributa*, and *ager publicus* of the city (...). Urbanization, the integration of these institutions, can be defined through the control mechanisms of the city (...)."

[68] E. Shils, "Center and Periphery," in *The Constitution of Society* (Chicago, 1972), 93.

[69] The bonding of the city of Rome with conquered territories is P. Ørsted's definition of Romanization (Ørsted (1985), 15).

[70] Z. Rubin *Civil War, Propaganda and Historiography, Latomus* 173 (Bruxelles, 1980).

[71] R. Syme *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939), 469.

sign with an existing reality or, in Rome's case, also with an appropriate myth[72]. Roman coinage was a connective element between the state and the individual, between Rome and the provinces. It went together with Romanization for it carried specific Rome-oriented information. An abstraction of Rome decorated the obverse and mythological topics directly related to the capital adorned the reverse.

This changed in the Late Republic and the Principate. The profile of the emperor appeared on the obverse and his achievements or people and things near and dear to him adorned the reverse. The commissioner of the engraving had an interest in promoting an idea and, logically, he had to choose a sign that could be decoded by the addressee and, ideally, brought into a larger context. The commissioner must have had a larger audience than himself or a small group around him; otherwise the various motifs on the reverse would have been pointless. Even if one were to believe falsely that the coins were solely minted for payment of the army, the interest in promotion of state or personal ideas as well as the possibility of further propagation was the driving force behind the choice of depictions.

Roads were another important link between the periphery and Rome. They assured communication, movements of troops, and connected colonies, *municipia*, and *uici* with the center. Based at the empire's borders or in the midst of conquered territory, colonies and military camps represented Rome. The colony, born out of strategic considerations, embodied Rome both visually and structurally. The taking hold of the land, the surveying and distributing, and finally the architectural layout signified Roman culture. There was the *forum*, the *basilica*, the *curia*, the *comitium*, the temple dedicated to the Capitoline Triad, the amphitheater, the baths, the protective wall, and streets, to name only a few, each one a sign that reflected back on the capital. The administration of the colony, composed of the

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[72] E. Walther *Allgemeine Zeichenlehre: Einführung in die Grundlagen der Semiotik* (Stuttgart, 1974), 129-30: "Die Verständigung kann nur erreicht werden, wenn wenigstens ein Teil des verwendeten Zeichen sowohl im Repertoire des Senders als auch in dem des Empfängers vorhanden sind, das heißt, wenn die Repertoires von Sender und Empfänger eine Vereinigung oder aber einen Durchschnitt bilden. (...) Die symbolische Repräsentation ist immer nur mittelbar kommunikativ, das heißt, sie hängt von der Vertrautheit mit den verwendeten Symbolen sowohl auf seiten des Senders als auch des Empfängers ab, die hinsichtlich irgendwelcher Objekte verwendet werden. Sie hängt aber weder vom gegenwärtigen Objekt noch von irgendwelchen Merkmalen des Objekts ab." For a more specific introduction to semiotics see U. Eco *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington and London, 1976).

decuriones, the *duum-* or *quattuoruiri iure dicendo*, and the *aediles*, followed Rome's traditional administrative model. The *flamen Romae et Augusti*, and the *seuiri Augustales* displayed and intensified the link with the capital through religious ceremonies.

Even military camps were designed like Roman cities. Each had a street system based on the traditional layout of *cardo* and *decumanus*, a sanctuary for the camp's gods, the military standards, a representation of the emperor, a *praetorium*, officers' quarters, barracks, a drill ground, and a defensive wall[73]. Roman soldiers and even auxiliaries functioned naturally as carriers of Roman culture. Military settlements attracted civilians, mainly indigenous people who economically benefited from the soldiers. In time even *canabae* could develop into small embodiments of Rome.

On the provincial level governors and their staff represented and enforced Rome's interests. The provincial council, *concilium prouinciae*, provided the provincial elite with a mechanism to put forth their interests and concerns independent of the imperial administration; and still, Rome was omnipresent. The head of the council, the *flamen* or *sacerdos prouinciae*, performed a religious ritual at the beginning of the yearly council session by the *ara Romae et Augusti*[74]. An especially successful provincial leader could be admitted into the lower levels of the imperial administration.

Romanization meant to a certain degree the displacement of one's own identity and subjugation to Roman values and signs, which led to the bonding of the peripheral areas and their inhabitants to the center. This subjugation, however, was rewarded. The one who could do it most successfully would be integrated within the 'Roman system' and could have an even better and financially more prosperous career. This reward mechanism, which no Roman politician or intellectual had ever analyzed, made assimilation inherently attractive. Yet subjugation and conformity to the norms and lifestyle of the

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[73] J. Stambaugh *The Roman City* (Baltimore, 1988), 250: "A standardized plan permitted soldiers to feel securely oriented within camps built at very different locations." This is certainly an important aspect, but we have to remember that it is a consequence and not an intentionally implemented fact. The Romans simply employed a 'system' they knew and since they were successful with it, they did not have to create or think of a new or different one.

[74] J. Deininger *Die Provinziallandtage der römischen Kaiserzeit von Augustus bis zum Ende des dritten Jahrhunderts n. Chr., Vestigia* 6 (München and Berlin, 1965). On the duties of a *flamen* or *sacerdos prouinciae* see M. Gayraud *Narbonne antique, Revue archéologique de Narbonnaise*, Supplement 8 (Paris, 1981), 409: *lex de flaminio prouinciae Narbonensis*.

conqueror had positive and negative aspects. Tacitus' remark in the *Agricola*

> paulatimque discessum ad delenimenta uitiorum, porticus et balineas ad conuiuiorum elegantiam. idque apud imperitos humanitas uocabatur, cum pars seruitutis esset[75].

should be understood in this context.

My study aims to provide, through the implementation of the complex historical method, a more precise picture of religious, socioeconomic, and cultural issues that formed the background for the cult's integration and the political employment of Isis and Sarapis independent of their cultic context. This book falls into two parts. In the first segment (Chapters Two and Three) the focus is on the political and cultural background of the Late Republic and the Principate. In this period we encounter the cult of Isis as a *superstitio* and then as a *sacrum publicum*. The second part (Chapters Four and Five) is a detailed analysis of the epigraphical and archaeological material related to Isis and Sarapis in the Rhine and Danubian provinces spanning from the first to the third century CE. This should reveal more about the cult's dedicators, its relation to other cults, its politicized employment, and its part in the integration of peripheral areas.

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[75] 21. For some further thoughts on Tacitus' statement see B. Baldwin, "Tacitus, *Agricola* 21: an Explanation," *Mnemosyne* 43 (1990), 455-6.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LATE REPUBLIC

1) Introduction

Isis, the sister and wife of Osiris, the mother of Horus, and, finally, the companion of the syncretic Sarapis, belongs to the gods of the Egyptian pantheon that represent a switch from cosmic to anthropomorphic entities, from the mythless *Urzeit* to the time of myths, when history is perceived as the manifestation of the divine will[1]. The struggle for supreme power between the brothers Osiris and Seth, the murder of the former, Isis' search for the pieces of her brother's/husband's body, the putting together of the mutilated body, and the son's revenge and consequent accession to the celestial throne represent the etiology of Egyptian dynastic ritual which furnished the structure for Egypt's religious and daily life. The *mythos* of Isis also shaped the perception of the ruler who was the embodiment of Horus and so the living myth.

The Macedonian Ptolemies retained this Egyptian perception of the ruler, as did the Romans after them, since it provided a reliable and effective mechanism of political control that guaranteed social stability, which, in turn, secured the production of Egypt's main cash crop: cereal. Greeks, however, had encountered Egyptian gods long before the appearance of the Macedonian rulers and quickly discovered common characteristics between the familiar Greek and the new Egyptian gods. This led to an equation but not a fusion of the deities. Herodotus confirms this when he equates Isis with Demeter[2], Osiris with Dionysos, and Horus with Apollo. These equations show the human mind at work. The unknown can only become known if it contains identifiable elements. Thus, Isis can be identified as Demeter, but, and this is important, she is **not** Demeter. A complete

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[1] J. Assmann *Aegypten: Theologie und Frömmigkeit einer frühen Hochkultur* (Stuttgart, 1984), 10-11 and 144-9.

According to the Heliopolite theology, Isis, possibly the personification of the throne, and Osiris, god of the dead, are the children of Nut, the sky-goddess who daily devours the heavenly bodies and bears them again, and Geb, the Earth-god.

[2] V.A. Tobin, "Isis and Demeter: Symbols of Divine Motherhood," *JAC* 28 (1991), 187-200.

fusion, one that would have turned Isis into Demeter, could only have taken place had the cultural framework, in this case Egypt, ceased to exist[3].

The Ptolemaic rule over Egypt brought a state-induced Hellenization of the country's main gods. Among them, the syncretic god Sarapis[4], the patron deity of Egypt's new dynasty, stands out. Sarapis is an inexact Greek transliteration (*'Οσαρᾶπις*) of the Egyptian 'Wsir-Ḥp,' the abstraction of all dead, in Egyptian terms, Osirified Apis-bulls[5]. The linguistic misunderstanding of 'Wsir-Ḥp' inspired the story, which Tacitus and Plutarch relate[6], that Ptolemy I Soter had Sarapis brought from Sinope, a city on the south shore of the Black Sea. The fact that the latter part of Sarapis' name (*-apis*) could also be linked to the Greek king Apis, who died in Egypt, must have been a welcome and exploitable coincidence. This ambiguity helped the first Ptolemies. It facilited an acceptance of the Egyptian state gods and bound Macedonians and Greeks, most of them in the royal service and located in Alexandria, to their new country and the Ptolemaic ruling family that claimed its right of succession in accordance with the old and established pharaonic system. Sarapis, the great god of Alexandria, took on attributes of Isis' original consort Osiris. Although Sarapis became the addressee of prayers and recipient of votive offerings, appeared together with Isis on monuments, and was named in connection with the royal family, he did not dislodge Osiris in the context of myth and ritual[7]. Osiris' central position in the mysteries of Isis remained. This modified continuation of the old Egyptian religious and political system under the Ptolemies successfully integrated the new while

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[3] Apuleius lets Isis say to the ass-shaped Lucius (*Met.* 11.5): "(...) cuius numen unicum multiformi specie, ritu uario, nomine multiiugo totus ueneratur orbis. inde primigenii Phryges Pessinuntiam deum Matrem (...) *sed* qui nascentis dei Soli inchoantibus inlustrantur radiis Aethiopes Arique priscaque doctrina pollentes Aegyptii, caerimoniis me propriis percolentes, appellant uero nomine reginam Isidem."

[4] I will employ the older term *Sarapis*. I will, however, retain the spelling *Serapis* when translating a document that uses this form.

[5] U. Wilcken *Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit*, vol. 1 (Berlin and Leipzig, 1927), 25-9, 77-82, 85-88, 91 and J. Stambaugh *Sarapis under the Early Ptolemies, EPRO* 25 (Leiden, 1972), especially 1-13. Good summaries in Vidman (1970), 23-25 and R. Turcan *Les cultes orientaux dans le monde romain* (Paris, 1989), 78-83.

[6] *Hist.* 4.83-4 and *Mor.* 361f-362e.

[7] Stambaugh (1972), 45.

keeping the old forms intact. Its basis was the reciprocal assimilation of the value and belief systems of the conqueror and the conquered.

Outside Egypt, the cults of the Hellenized deities Isis, Sarapis, Horus or Harpocrates, Apis, and Anubis found adherents among Greeks. The cults were adapted to already familiar models of worship and initiation[8]. The disintegration of the *polis* and the intensified physical and intellectual confrontation with *new worlds*, culminating in Alexander's wars of conquest, affected the religious attitude of individuals. As the eastern Mediterranean world struggled to redefine itself under Macedonian rule, Hellenized Egyptian cults increasingly attained followers among native Greeks. Since paganism was inclusive and able to accommodate new cults, the veneration of these new gods would not cause the exclusion of the older, established ones. These cults might have offered better emotional support than the older ones, especially in times of great social upheaval or changes, when old belief patterns could seem insufficient.

An inscription recording a Piraean decree of 333 BCE suggests that the first adherents of the cult of Isis in Attica had been native Egyptians, who entertained economic ties with Athens. By the end of the third century BCE, the cult was established in Athens and the appointed priest of the cult was an Athenian citizen. The same happened on Delos which, among all Greek places, provides us with the most archaeological and epigraphical data regarding Egyptian cults. Only Egyptians are attested as priests on Delos in the beginning of the third century BCE. Delians and Athenians, however, followed them later[9]. As the commercial center of the Aegean, Delos entertained, for example, economic ties with southern Italy. Traders shuttling between the island and Italian port cities brought

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[8] Burkert (1987), 2.

[9] F. Dunand *Le culte d'Isis dans le bassin oriental de la Méditerranée*, *EPRO* 26 (Leiden, 1973), vol. 2, 4: "On sait que le premier document mentionnant l'existence d'un culte d'Isis sur le sol grec est un décret du Pirée, de l'année 333 a.C., (...) rappelant que les Égyptiens avaient déjà obtenu la permission de fonder, dans la même ville, un temple en l'honneur d'Isis." p. 9: "Sur les débuts du culte officiel à Athènes, nous ne possédons guère de données; la plus ancienne inscription le concernant paraît être une dédicace à Sarapis et à Isis qui peut remonter à la fin du IIIe siècle ou au début du IIe. Le principal intérêt de ce texte est de mentionner deux desservants: le prêtre, qui est un prêtre annuel et très probablement un citoyen athénien, et le zacore (...)." On Delos see pp. 83-115. In addition, by the same author, "Cultes égyptiens hors d'Egypte. Essai d'analyse des conditions de leur diffusion," in *Religions, Pouvoir Rapports Sociaux*, *Centre de Recherches d'Histoire Ancienne* 32 (1980), 74.

these cults with them[10], as did Italian merchants, who returned to Italy after the sack of the island by Mithridates' general Archelaus in 88 BCE. Once in Rome's backyard, it was only a matter of time before the cults would enter the capital. The process that would eventually turn the Hellenized Egyptian deities, especially Isis and Sarapis, into Roman imperial gods had begun.

> For Egyptian cults the time of Sulla must have been very advantageous (...). It would fit well into the context of this stirring epoch with the unleashed desires of the simple people[11].

L. Vidman cautiously restated a widespread notion. The reason for such a statement has to be sought in the unshaken scholarly belief that educated, that is to say, civilized, Romans could not get involved with such an utterly un-Roman religion. Their unquestionable obedience to the *mos maiorum* would simply not allow such behavior. This opinion, however, does not explain why 1) Isiac symbolism made its way onto coins, 2) Egyptian motifs can be found on walls of villas from the Republican period, or 3) the custodians of the *mos maiorum*, the Senate, only sporadically judged the cult to be a *superstitio*.

Disappointment in the state structure and the cults promoted by the state must have influenced many generations. From the turbulent times of the Gracchi to the emergence of Octavian Augustus, people searched for means to achieve social stability. The situation paralleled the one before the introduction of the cult of Cybele in 204 BCE. Since the worship of the Egyptian goddess had neither the frenzied character of the Great Mother cult, which included physical mutilation in its initiation rites, nor the emotional outbursts of the Bacchanalia, Isiac worship did not promote behavior that could be considered asocial by Roman standards. Rather, the reverse is true: this highly structured cult could attract some of those who questioned the success of Roman cults and, by extension, that of the state. By

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[10] For more detail see Malaise (1972) and (1984), 1615-91. F. Coarelli, "Iside Capitolina, Clodio e i mercanti di schiavi," in *Alessandria e il mondo ellenistico-romano, Studi in onore di Achille Achiani*, eds. N. Bonacasa and A. di Vita, vol. 3, 461-75, *Studi e materiali Instituto di Archeologia università di Palermo* 6 (Rome, 1984), 466, disagreed with Malaise on the singular importance of the Mithridatic sack of the island.

[11] Vidman (1970), 98: "Sulla's Zeit muß dem ägyptischen Kult sehr günstig gewesen sein (...). In den Rahmen dieser bewegten Epoche mit den entfesselten Leidenschaften des einfachen Volkes könnte es gut passen."

providing them 'cultic' stability, it kept them from falling outside state accepted norms.

By the second century BCE, Rome's predominant position in the Mediterranean became indisputable, and Hellenistic influences were shaping its cultural and intellectual atmosphere. This tendency did not recede during the period of the Republic's final struggle; to the contrary, Hellenistic influences inspired and shaped Roman literature, art, philosophy, and religion more than ever before. Through the intellectual confrontation, intensified by the military subjugation of the Hellenistic world, Hellenistic ideas received an *interpretatio Romana* and were integrated into the Roman *Gedankenwelt*. Among all the foreign intellectual and cultural influences that Rome encountered and ultimately shaped in one way or another, the Hellenistic ones were the most decisive.

Aside from the Roman state structure, it was this interaction with external 'intellectual impulses' that infused the Roman process of individual self-discovery[12]. The rise of the individual can be best seen in politics and observed in the literary output of the day. Personal interests and aims shaped Roman politics more and more. Powerful individuals would band together only in situations that threatened the essence of the state and thus hampered their predominant position. In literature, one has to think only of Catullus' poems, Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, Cicero's manifold literary output, Caesar's *Commentarii*, or Sallust's monographs, where personal feelings, wishes, opinions, goals, and experiences either inspired these men to write or to make themselves the subject of their writing.

Those at the short end of the economic and sociopolitical scale, the 'simple folk,' did not leave records behind. This did not prevent scholars from working out a hypothesis *ex silentio*. While members of the upper class embraced literature, art, and philosophy to satisfy their individual needs, members of the lower class found personal fulfillment through participation in the various oriental cults. In other words, the level of education and sophistication shaped the choice. The notion, however, that only the lower stratum of the Roman

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[12] K. Christ *Krise und Untergang der römischen Republik* (Darmstadt, 1979), 406, formulated it in the following way: "Von allen Einzelheiten abgesehen ist es indessen entscheidend, daß der große römische Individualisierungsprozeß der späten Republik in seiner Ausbildung und Artikulation, Gestaltung und Entwicklung fort und fort durch die Konfrontation mit fremden geistigen Impulsen geformt und vorangetrieben wurde."

society produced Isiac worshippers cannot be proved. In fact, this opinion reveals a myopic view based on literary creations of later date, and its uncritical acceptance can only lead to erroneous interpretations of the archaeological, numismatic, and epigraphical evidence. Since the records for this period on Egypt, Isis, and Sarapis come from members of the social and/or economic elite, only their interest or disinterest can be examined conclusively.

2) The Creation of Illusions

All conflicts of the Late Republic - the Social War, the struggle against Mithridates in Asia and Sertorius in Spain, and finally the Civil War - barely modified Rome's social and economic system[13], and the political system changed only gradually. The various wars caused incessant economic, social, and political stress. Rome's emergence as a hegemonial power brought about the encounter of new ideas, opinions, and tastes. Stress encouraged, especially among the affluent, an alternative lifestyle, most of the time away from the capital with its noise, masses, physical and traditional constraints. New ideas, opinions, and tastes shaped this alternative.

Wealthy Romans built increasingly elaborate villas. These luxurious residences could provide a material diversion from daily life and its routine. Once inside the villa complex, its owner would have entered another, sometimes exotic, world. Real estate along the Bay of Naples was in great demand. Relatively close to Rome, it provided access to Greek culture and natural beauty[14]. "[B]y Cicero's day the coast glittered with luxurious villas of the Roman

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[13] G. Alföldy *The Social History of Rome* (Baltimore, 1988), 85: "By and large the economic foundations of the social system remained as they had been since the Second Punic War. As before, economic activity was founded upon agrarian production above else (...)." Further, p. 86: "(...) the stratification of society underwent minimal change. Yet in the period of open conflict some social strata suffered while others managed a considerable advance. Moreover, in some cases, their composition changed markedly. However, no entirely new social strata came into existence and none of the social strata which had developed previously disappeared. Thus the model of a society ruled by a narrow elite with some characteristics of order remained largely intact."

[14] J.H. D'Arms *Romans on the Bay of Naples: A Social and Cultural Study of the Villas and Their Owners from 150 B.C. to A.D. 400* (Cambridge MA, 1970), 16: "Campanian cities in general profited greatly from the expansion of Roman power in the second century B.C."

upper classes[15]"; and some of these villas had murals, still visible today, depicting Isiac symbols, Egyptian landscapes, and mysteries.

But a villa owner commissioning such a mural was not necessarily a devotee of the depicted mysteries or an ardent admirer of Egypt. In this regard, the impact of the geographical expansion of the Roman world on the Roman *Gedankenwelt* and Roman art must be kept in view. Artists began to incorporate new elements in their work that became components of a new *Roman* style. The specific use of such components, however, would not have occurred without the approval of the owner: he must have had the last say regarding the embellishment of his walls[16]. One can imagine that he would be drawn to that which represented the 'latest trend'; but this would also have to reflect his taste, arouse his interest, and conform to his wishes. The nilotic landscapes delineated an exotic world; in addition, they also presented a world that was politically very much in Rome's sphere of interest and would eventually become part of the empire. In this manner, the exotic land 'beyond,' which provided an imaginary escape from the accepted and enforced norms, was at the same time 'within' the Roman sphere, within its realm of activity and control. As such, it found its way into Roman art.

Although Isiac symbols emerge from an immediate cult connection, K. Schefold has rightly pointed out that

> Certainly not all inhabitants of houses with Isiac symbols could have been adherents of this religion. The same is true of Bacchic motifs[17].

The symbols had been removed from their original cultic context and integrated into Roman art. These symbols would retain their original meaning only for the initiated, who could project this specific understanding back into the representations. But the cult initiate was certainly not the target audience. The whole composition, embedded

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[15] D'Arms (1970), vii.

[16] On this subject see E. Winsor Leach, "Patrons, Painters, and Patterns: The Anonymity of Romano-Campanian Painting and the Transition from the Second to the Third Style," in *Literary and Artistic Patronage in Ancient Rome*, ed. B.K. Gold, (Austin, 1982), 135-73.

[17] *Pompeianische Malerei. Sinn- und Ideengeschichte* (Basel, 1952), 58: "Gewiss können nicht alle Bewohner der Häuser mit Isissymbolen Anhänger dieser Religion gewesen sein. Aber dasselbe galt von den bacchischen Motiven. Diese Symbole meinen nicht eine bestimmte Lehre, sondern allgemeiner Weihe, Unsterblichkeit." This statement, although more general, follows the same logic just criticized by the author. The murals alone can neither reveal a villa owner as an adherent of a specific mystery cult nor as one interested in immortality.

in an architectural and artistic framework, and not just disconnected individual symbols, created the desired illusions. These illusions created atmospheres relevant to the purpose of the individual rooms and the villa as a whole.

Nilotic landscapes, as other representations of nature, had an additional dimension. Egypt, which stood for the *other* but existed in the perceptible and comprehensible world of the Romans, could provide an intellectual stimulus to escape the actual surroundings, the real world with all its trappings. The escape, however, would never go beyond the delineated boundaries, the ones determined by the reality outside the villa walls. Isiac symbols on villa walls should not surprise and lead to daring interpretations. Isis and Sarapis were strangers neither to Campania nor to Rome. In Campania, their cult had been introduced in the second century BCE when there were close economic ties between Delos and Ptolemaic Egypt. With the political integration of this area as a result of the Social War, cult adherents would surface in Rome. The divine couple represented not only the most important Egyptian deities, they were also symbols of Egypt; as such they or their attributes were integrated into the paintings. In short, they found their way onto murals providing controlled illusions as part of the experienced Romano-Campanian reality.

3) Numismatic Evidence

Present scholarship owes much to A. Alföldi who discovered that some coin issues of the Late Republic had Isis-related symbols as control marks[18]. Issues of L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, moneyer during the Social War, were the first to display these control marks. C. Vibius Pansa and L. Julius Brusio, moneyers in the 80's BCE, followed this trend. The serrati of L. Papius and L. Roscius Fabatus, both moneyers in the 70's BCE, incorporate Isiac iconography as well. According to Alföldi, the last manifestation of 'Isis-propaganda' appeared with the denarii of C. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, who was moneyer in the late 60's BCE.

In Alföldi's view, the moneyers had nothing to do with the selection of Isiac symbols. The reason for this conclusion is the fact that there are supposedly almost no traces of family propaganda otherwise so important to the issuing moneyers. The subaltern personnel of the Roman mint simply inserted these symbols without

[18] Alföldi (1954).

consulting the moneyer in charge. They were members of a *collegium pastophorum*, located on the Capitoline hill, and saw an opportunity to propagate their religious and political ideas[19]. The mint employees lived around the temple of Juno Moneta, where this *collegium* was located. According to Alföldi, the proximity of the mint personnel to the sanctuary of Isis made it possible that throngs of slaves and freedmen working in the *moneta* formed "an always battle-ready revolutionary vanguard of Isiacs[20]." Alföldi wanted the lower classes involved because he thought of a socio-revolutionary mass movement, for which the cult association of the Alexandrian gods provided the human reservoir[21]. This reservoir supplied troops to the revolutionaries who opposed the status quo.

The Roman revolution, however, had little to do with social issues or improvements intended for the *populus*. The so-called revolution was, since the murder of Tiberius Gracchus, simply a struggle for political supremacy among the elite who either attended to the *utilitas rei publicae* or acknowledged the *commodum populi*[22]. Further, since the cult of the mother-goddess Isis did not contain ideas or thoughts of social reform, it could not propagate them. It is surprising that its *collegium* is thought to have furnished a "battle-ready revolutionary vanguard" for a non-existing socio-revolutionary mass movement of the first century BCE.

In contrast to the coin issues with Isiac symbols as control marks, Alföldi thought that the curule aedile M. Plaetorius Cestianus alone was responsible for an Isis Panthea type. This coin proved that the opposition of the Capitoline Isiacs to the Senate and the administration could not have happened without the secret or public support of important politicians[23]. Thus, Alföldi undermined his own argument

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[19] Alföldi (1954), 30. M. Crawford *Roman Republican Coinage* (Cambridge, 1974), vol. 2, 584, n. 2, however: "It makes no difference whether the differential marks are letters, numerals or symbols; the argument of A. Alföldi that certain symbols show the technicians in the mint to have been devotees of Isis is simply fantastic; are other technicians to be regarded as strong believers in augural ritual?"

[20] Alföldi (1954), 30: "(...) die stets kampfbereite revolutionäre Stoßtruppe der Isiaci (...)."

[21] Alföldi (1954), 26: "Auch für die sozialrevolutionäre Massenbewegung des 1. Jh. v. Chr. ist ein fremder Geheimkult eines der wichtigsten Sammelbecken geworden, nämlich der Kult der alexandrinischen Götter."

[22] Cic. *Sest.* 45 (96-98).

[23] Alföldi (1954), 30: "Daß der freche Widerstand der kapitolinischen Isisgemeinde gegen den Senat und die Behörden nicht ohne eine heimliche oder offene Unterstützung gewichtiger Politiker erfolgt sein konnte, hat schon G. Lafaye er-

that the moneyers had nothing to do with the insertion of Isiac symbols as control marks. On the other hand, he was right in emphasizing that the Alexandrian gods and artistic reproductions of Egyptian landscapes captivated Rome's high society[24]. This fascination encouraged an integration of Isiac symbols among control marks and might have found an additional impetus in the circulating Ptolemaic coin issues.

The engravers were highly skilled craftsmen. Current artistic trends shaped their work, not the engraver's religious, social, or personal interests and convictions. While the general concept of a coin type with all possible symbols lay in the hands of the moneyer, the engravers were in charge of its execution. They had to produce acceptable and usable dies and could exercise artistic freedom only in the mode of representing and arranging the traditional motifs. The task of choosing the type and the relevant symbols was the privilege of the moneyer, and his choice was bound by state and/or family tradition. The choice of control mark symbols, however, provided him with a possibility to loosen up the traditional lines. But 'revolutionary' signs could not find their way onto a die unless a moneyer wanted them included.

There is an additional problem with Alföldi's hypothesis. The headdress of Isis, a sun disk surrounded by cow-horns originally belonging to Hathor, the *sistrum*, and the *situla* did not have an inherently revolutionary character. Such a meaning would have to have been consciously infused, which means that those who opposed the state would have made them symbols of their cause. In addition, the revolutionary meaning of these control marks must have been propagated among the Roman populace, or at least among the recipients of the coins; otherwise, the purpose of the symbols would not have been fulfilled. The sporadic use of Isiac symbols as control marks, however, speaks against such a propagation.

The hypothesis that the input by a *tresuir auro argento aere flano feriundo*, an aedile or a quaestor was non-existent in the designing process falls short in several other points. First, it inadvertently reveals an acceptance of the widespread, yet false, notion that only foreigners would embrace Isis; or, if Romans, then only those of the lower classes or those who would use these classes for their own political machination. Second, when Ti. Veturius broke with the

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kannt. Diese Annahme kann durch ein bisher verkanntes Münzdokument zur Gewißheit erhoben werden."

[24] Alföldi (1954), 26-7.

tradition and furnished his coins with an individual design, coins not only promoted the Roman state but could also advertise the moneyer and his family[25]. This form of promotion received a more complex function under Augustus[26]. Since the moneyer wanted to advertise himself and his family, he must have made sure of the proper design or designs. The position of a well-used *monetalis* could pave the way to a successful political career[27].

Third, L. Papius' innovation, that his control mark "consists of a symbol on the obverse, and another on the reverse, bearing some relations to each other[28]," strongly suggests that the symbols were chosen consciously and not just randomly. Thus, a secret insertion of control marks by the mint's subaltern personnel was highly improbable. The purpose of these control marks was mainly to regulate "the use of obverse and reverse dies in relation to each other[29]." This necessity for a control mechanism opened the possibility and option of inserting an additional message relating to the issuing authority, even if the message was only the expression of one's artistic taste or the awareness of current artistic fashions.

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[25] The date of Ti. Venturius' moneyership is uncertain. Th. Mommsen *Römisches Münzwesen* (Berlin, 1860), 55-6, no. 169 set it in 129 BCE, E. Babelon *Description historique et chronologique des monnaies de la République romaine* vol. 2 (Paris and London, 1885-6), 533-6 put it in the period 150-125 BCE, and H.A. Grueber *Coins of the Roman Republic in the British Museum* vol. 2 (London, 1910), 281-2 thought 93-2 BCE appropriate.

[26] Some might label it 'propaganda,' a much overused and thus vague term. In connection with Augustus, one tends to think of an elaborate 'propaganda machine,' something that, as Zanker (1988) has shown, never existed.

[27] The moneyership was an annual and elective office. Crawford (1974), vol. 2, 602: "Since ultimate responsibility for the coinage lay with the people, it is reasonable to suppose that the moneyers were elected rather than appointed. The absence of the moneyers from the lists of magistrates in the epigraphic *lex repetundarum*, the *lex Latinae tabulae Bautinae* and Cicero, *Cluent.* 148 proves only that moneyers were not by virtue of their office qualified for admission to the Senate (...)."

A young man of a senatorial family had more or less a guaranteed senatorial career. Still he wanted to establish himself in his own right. On the controversial question of the inheritability of senatorial status, although for imperial times, see G. Alföldy *Konsulat und Senatorenstand unter den Antoninen. Prosopographische Untersuchungen zur senatorischen Führungsschicht. Antiquitas* 27 (Bonn, 1977), J. Hahn and M. M. Leunissen, "Statistical Method and Inheritance of the Consulate under the Early Roman Empire," *Phoenix* 44 (1990): 60-81, and K. Hopkins *Death and Renewal. Sociological Studies in Roman History* 2 (Cambridge, 1983).

[28] Grueber (1910), vol. 1, 372.

[29] Crawford (1974), vol. 2, 586.

The moneyers started to use increasingly obscure, i.e. unconventional, control marks to keep track of production in the first century BCE[30]. This was, after all, the century of individualism and the expression thereof. Since Egyptian motifs were in vogue and integrated into the Roman *Gedankenwelt*, and in the course of the century Egypt became a Roman province, one has to understand the appearance and use of Isiac symbols as control marks as an expression of the artistic taste and awareness of the *Zeitgeist*. Tradition had circumscribed the choice of coin motifs, and the insertion of pictograms as control marks instead of numbers or letters presented a small yet clear break with this tradition. The individual had found a way to express himself inside the restricting conventions.

These minuscule pictures, unlike fractions, numbers, and letters, constitute expressive power and, consequently, trigger a search for meaning. A picture of a carpenter's square or a flower can easily be identified and assigned to the real and comprehensible world. Others, such as a pentagram or the headdress of Isis[31], are immediately allocated to the metaphysical world and therefore thought to require special knowledge. While one searches for the true meaning of these control marks, their actual intended purpose is thrust into the background. The purpose, the regulation of the obverse and reverse dies, is primary and direct. The meaning, on the other hand, is secondary and indirect. A proper understanding of the symbols requires knowledge of the relevant historical and art-historical context and of the issuing authority. In other words, we have to establish familiarity not only with these signs, which are by nature indirectly communicative[32], but also with the context in which they were produced.

Occasionally, despite the sparse prosopographic evidence we have, similarities appear among the moneyers whose coinage carried Isiac symbols. Except for the two Calpurnii Pisones Frugi and L. Julius Bursio, the moneyers were of municipal origin. They either came from or had ties to regions where the cult of Isis was securely established, like Campania and southern Italy, or Juno Sospes was worshipped, as in Lanuvium. Since Isis and Juno Sospes, as

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[30] A. Burnett *Coinage in the Roman World* (London, 1987), 22-3.

[31] A. Banti *Corpus nummorum Romanorum*, vol. 1: *Monetazione republicana* (Florence, 1981), 1-46 put together a clearly arranged catalog of all symbols used on Republican coins.

[32] The proper understanding of a sign has to be learned. Acquired knowledge serves as a decoder of symbols. For more explanation see Walther (1974), 130.

powerful female goddesses, shared similar properties, a tendency to favor Isis-related symbols does not surprise. The choice of symbols could well be based on a conscious attempt to put forth a harmonious and wholesome design. These symbols and family origins did not make the moneyers devotees or prospective devotees of Isis.

This becomes apparent when one considers that symbols clearly referring to Isis, such as the *sistrum*, *situla*, and headdresses, make up an incredibly small fraction of the symbols used[33]. L. Roscius Fabatus' output shows barely a 2% use, the others less than 1%. There is a slight increase in percentage for symbols that relate directly or indirectly to Egypt, such as the crocodile, the lotus, and the caduceus. The latter, the vaguest, is the front-runner. Four and one-half percent of C. Vibius Pansa's, 3.4% of L. Calpurnius Piso's, 1.9% of C. Calpurnius Piso's, and 1.7% of L. Julius Bursio's coins have this Egyptian charm as control mark. The other moneyers left it at 1%. Symbols that could be associated with Isis are the cornucopia, the symbol of Fortuna, and Ceres' ear of wheat. The occurrence of the cornucopia is as follows: L. Roscius Fabatus 2.5%, L. Calpurnius Piso 1.6%, C. Vibius Pansa 1.5%, C. Calpurnius Piso 1.2%, L. Papius and L. Julius Bursio less than 1%. No coin of M. Plaetorius Cestianus listed by Grueber has the cornucopia as a symbol and the ear of wheat occurs only on coins of L. Calpurnius Piso (1%).

The sparse occurrence of Isis-related symbols as control marks argues against their use as conveyers of a specific message. Only the consistent and repetitive employment of signs can guarantee the correct comprehension of their significance and their effectiveness. Thus, the purpose of the signs related to Isis and Egypt was the efficient control of the coin production by regulating the use of the obverse and reverse dies[34]. The significance of these pictograms

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[33] These calculations are based on the lists in Grueber (1910). The majority of the coins are silver. The exceptions are: L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi 10 Ae out of 329 Ar and C. Vibius Pansa 11 Ae out of 84 Ar. The fact that only the coins in the British Museum are taken as the basis for my calculations does not affect the two basic conclusions; namely, that a) the Isiac symbols are part of a vast array of symbols and b) their occurrence is low. In addition, the calculation does not take into consideration the possibility that a coin was minted with the same control mark on the obverse and reverse, but as the possibility of this occurrence is considered remote, the effect on the probability of symbol distribution is negligible.

[34] Crawford (1974), vol. 2, 586: "Since obverse dies lasted longer than reverse dies, the pairing of one obverse die and one reverse die meant a waste of part of the working life of one obverse die."

was the outlet they provided for the expression of individuality and, perhaps, personal interests. All moneyers, as all well-to-do Romans, had been exposed to the intellectual and artistic currents of the Late Republic; their coin issues were simply an expression of the *Zeitgeist*.

A specific political motive for the choice of Isiac symbols as control marks cannot be established. Coins with these symbols appeared not only when the *optimates* exercised political control over Rome, but also when the *populares* were in charge. In addition, a Roman who opposed the politics of an all-powerful consul or a dictator could not have been chosen moneyer. Consequently, the symbols could not have carried a specific political message.

4) Historical Background

The murder of the reform-minded tribune M. Livius Drusus neither strengthened the cause of the reactionaries nor brought about a consolidation of the oligarchy. On the contrary, it accentuated the conflict among the various interest groups inside the oligarchy. A direct consequence of the murder of Drusus was the Social War (91 - 89 BCE), and for its duration the main competitors for political power, the *optimates* and *populares*, temporarily but unconditionally united against an external enemy, the *socii*. The defense of the Roman system of government simply took precedence over personal political ambitions. The death of Drusus and the Social War halted the occasional and usually individually inspired search for desperately needed solutions to Rome's social problems and tensions. The time of the social reformers had come to an end and with it the possibility of combatting the actual weakness of the political system.

With the end of the Social War came a more intense and bloody struggle between the *optimates* and the *populares*. The *optimates* embraced L. Cornelius Sulla, consul of 88 BCE and holder of the command against Mithridates. The *populares* espoused the Marian P. Sulpicius Rufus, tribune of the same year, and L. Cornelius Cinna, consul of 87 BCE. Cinna's attempt to annul Sulla's legislation failed and he was illegally deposed. A successful march on Rome seemed to prove that Cinna together with Marius was in control. These were fleeting moments of glory: Marius died in 86 BCE and Cinna was murdered while preparing a campaign against the Liburni in 84 BCE. Sulla returned from Asia, after successfully concluding a peace treaty with Mithridates of Pontus in 85 BCE. Hearing of Cinna's death, he marched on Rome. The reaction of the *optimates*

was incomparable with the ones of earlier times. But neither Sulla's dictatorship (82 -79 BCE) nor the *proscriptio*, the brutal and calculated mass execution of political adversaries, nor the reactionary reforms could force or guarantee the survival of the oligarchic Republic.

The successive dismantling of Sulla's reforms after the dictator's retirement and sudden death proves how fragile and temporary the dictator's construct had been[35]. While trying to strengthen the Senate as an institution, Sulla inadvertently made "the first decisive step on the road to monarchy in the Roman state[36]" thereby weakening the very institution he had intended to strengthen. Struggle, allegiances, and personal ambitions shaped Roman politics. The ascent of the politician whose agenda put personal advancement ahead of the welfare of the community could not be stopped. The age of the individual went hand in hand with the decay of the Roman Republic.

5) The monetales

L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, a moneyer in 90 BCE[37], was the first to issue denarii with Isiac symbols as control marks. His homonymous grandfather, consul of 133 and designated censor for 120 BCE[38],

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[35] Ch. Meier *Res publica amissa. Eine Studie zu Verfassung und Geschichte der späten römischen Republik* (Wiesbaden, ²1988), 266: "Die Diskrepanz zwischen den Möglichkeiten des Senats und den übrigen Mächten sowie den Aufgaben war zu groß, als daß man dem Haus mit der Herstellung eines entschiedenen Regimes einen Gefallen hätte tun können. Aber das konnte Sulla nicht wissen (...). Die Probleme waren zu groß, die Ärzte überzeugten nicht recht, und daher war die Kur zu anstrengend, sie griff mehr an, als daß sie nutzte."

[36] Alföldy (1988), 79.

[37] Crawford (1974), vol. 1, 77: "(...) the issues of D. Silanus and L. Piso Frugi refer to the Lex Papiria, the issue of L. Piso Frugi is of unparalleled size; given that both the Lex Papiria and the issue of L. Piso Frugi fall shortly before 89, it is hard to dissociate them from the Social War. (...) it is not really credible that the tribunate of M. Livius Drusus in 91 should have been without coinage, (...) it also seems to me more probable that a full college of moneyers would have struck in 90, the first year of the Social War, than in 89, when reserves were running down." Crawford suggests the following possibilities for the year 90 BCE: L. Piso Frugi, Q. Titius, and C. Vibius Pansa or D. Silanus and L. Piso Frugi. F. Münzer, "L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi," *RE* 5.2 (Stuttgart, 1897), 1395-6, no. 98 and Mommsen (1860), 580, no. 209, thought the moneyer L. Calpurnius to have been the tribune of the plebs who created two new tribes and was responsible for the granting of Roman citizenship to soldiers.

[38] Cic. *Brut.* 106.

launched the successful counter-attack against the Sicilian Slave Revolt under the leadership of the Syrian Eunus. L. Piso Frugi's father, again of the same name, received the *corona aurea* while fighting under his father in the First Slave War[39]. He went on to become praetor in Hispania ulterior, where he died[40]. A glorious career was in prospect for the offspring of such an illustrious family. The annually elected position of a *tresuir monetalis* could provide the necessary public exposure to lead rapidly to a distinguished senatorial career. Men in their twenties usually competed for the moneyership[41]. Taking this as well as the year of death of his father into consideration, L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi was born not later than 110 BCE, probably like M. Pupius Piso Frugi, consul of 61 BCE, around 115 BCE.

L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi's highest political position was the praetorship in 74 BCE, which he held with the notorious Verres. Cicero, whose daughter Tullia had been engaged to the son of L. Calpurnius[42], mentioned him as one of the prosecutors against P. Gabinius[43]. L. Calpurnius' political career and affiliations seemed constant compared to those of his relative M. Pupius Piso Frugi, a sometime friend of Cicero[44]. The latter, a true opportunist, had married Cinna's widow, divorced her and then sided with Sulla. Later he supported Pompey and received a consulship. His political career ended when he took Clodius' side and opposed Cicero. L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi used as his coin type a laureated head of Apollo on the obverse[45], and a galloping horseman holding a lighted

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[39] V. Max. 4.3.10 and Plin. *Nat.* 33.38.

[40] Cic. *Ver.* 4.56 and App. *Hisp.* 16.99.

[41] Crawford (1974), vol. 2, 710: "Insofar as there is a normal pattern, it is of men serving as moneyers in their 20s; but there are two periods when there seems to be a tendency for the moneyership to be held instead shortly before the praetorship or consulship. The first of the two periods in question runs for just over a decade from c. 130 onwards (...)." p. 711: "The second of the two periods falls during the First Civil War and one is tempted to suggest that Caesar accelerated the careers of some of his moneyers, C. Pansa, J. Brutus and L. Plautius Plancus."

[42] *Ad Att.* 1.3.3 (67 BCE): "Tulliolam C. Piso L. f. Frugi despondimus."

[43] *Div. Caec.* 64.

[44] *Brut.* 236, 240, and 310.

[45] Crawford (1974), vol. 2, 731: "It has been argued that the head of Apollo on the coinage of this period (Social War) is a *popularis* symbol; attractive though this idea is, I do not think it can stand. (...) A list of the issues of the 80s bearing the head of Apollo likewise fails to provide convincing evidence of *popularis* association of the type."

torch in the right hand and the reins in the left hand on the reverse. The list of the control mark symbols, of which Isis-related symbols make up only a small portion, is extensive[46]. There was an attempt to have an efficient coin production. The need for an increased and speedy production during the first year of the Social War, however, hampered, if not obliterated, this effort.

As an offspring of a well-to-do family, L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi would have been exposed to the intellectual and artistic currents of the waning Republic. It is therefore not surprising that some of his control marks parallel elements used in mural paintings. The fact that his grandfather and father had come into contact with the Hellenistic world while fighting the slaves in Sicily reinforces L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi's 'cosmopolitan' image.

C. Vibius Pansa[47] was the second to use Isiac symbols. Very little is known about his family. The legend on his coins identifies him as the son of a C. Vibius. One coin type, the head of a laureated Apollo on the obverse and a walking Ceres, suggesting Demeter, with torches in her hands on the reverse, as well as the mask of a Silenus on the reverse of another type[48], suggest southern Italian family origins. The real estate holdings of C. Vibius Pansa's adoptive son, consul in 43 BCE, support such a conjecture. He had estates at Puteoli and Cumae, a house in Naples, and perhaps an estate at Pompeii.

The year of C. Vibius Pansa's moneyership cannot be securely established; dates range from 90-83 BCE[49]. His political sympathies seem to have belonged to Marius[50] because his adoptive son C.

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[46] Grueber (1910), vol. 1, 252 put together a list of 105 symbols.

[47] H. Grundel, "C. Vibius Pansa," *RE* Zweite Reihe 16.2 (Stuttgart, 1958), 1953, no. 15.

[48] Other types are: 1) head of laureated Apollo on the obverse, Minerva, holding a trophy in the right hand and a spear and the reins in the left hand, in a quadriga drawn by four galloping horses on the reverse. 2) same as 1) on the obverse and a mirror picture of 1) on the reverse. 3) mask of a bearded Pan with goat ears on the obverse, mask of the bearded Silenus wearing an ivy wreath on the reverse.

[49] Crawford (1974), vol. 1, 77, thought of 90 or 89 BCE; R.J. Rowland, "Numismatic Propaganda under Cinna," *TAPA* 97 (1966), 407-19, 89 or 88 BCE, Grundel (1958) and Grueber (1910), vol. 2, 289 opted for 87 BCE, and Mommsen (1860), 585, no. 215 decided on a range between 88-83 BCE.

[50] D. C. *Hist.* 45.17.1: "*(Οὐίβιος) γάρ, καίτοι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ ἐς τὰ λευκώματα τὰ Σύλλεια ἐσγραφέντος ὕπατος τότε ἀπεδείχθη.*"

Pansa Caetorianus[51], who had sided with Caesar, regained some, if not all and more, of his father's fortune, which had been confiscated during Sulla's proscription. The choice for coin designs does not reveal C. Vibius Pansa's political orientation nor do the control marks, here *caduceus* and *cornucopia*, disclose an affinity with Isis. They are vague, suggesting, if anything, nothing more than well-being and good fortune. Since C. Vibius used these two symbols sparingly, as our calculation has shown, one has to conclude that they were only two among an array of possible control mark symbols. The fact that C. Vibius had ties with an area where Isis had been introduced in the second century BCE meant an extensive and intensive exposure to Greek and other Mediterranean cultures. The interpretation that C. Pansa chose these symbols to express his political sentiment takes its apparent validity not from the numismatic but from the literary evidence provided by Dio Cassius that he had been among the proscribed. It amounts to nothing more than a restrospective inference that cannot stand without Dio's statement and as such should be dismissed.

As quaestor, L. Julius Bursio[52] minted coins in the mid 80's BCE[53]. Cinna still exercised control over the state: the first plebeian Julius, who brought it to noteworthy reputation, could not but be a supporter of Rome's strong man Cinna and the *populares*. The political conditions changed, however, when Sulla reached a peace agreement with Mithridates in 85 BCE. An open confrontation between Cinna and Sulla was imminent; not even Cinna's death

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[51] Gundel (1958), 1953-65, no. 16, T.P. Wiseman *New Men in the Roman Senate B.C. 139 - A.D. 14* (Oxford, 1971), 274, no. 490, T.R.S. Broughton *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic*, vol. 3 supplement (Atlanta, 1986), 220 and Rowland (1966), 409: "This Pansa is undoubtedly the person who became the adoptive father of the Caesarian Pansa, who, about 48, imitated and expanded the elder Pansa's coin types (...)."

[52] A curule chair as one of the control marks seems to confirm Mommsen's assumption [(1860), 592, no. 222] that L. Julius was quaestor and not *tresuir* when he issued his coins. F. Münzer, "L. Julius Bursio," *RE* 19.2 (Stuttgart, 1917), 181-2, no. 126 and 111, no. 30.

[53] Crawford (1974), vol. 2, 605, suggested 86-85 BCE (the legend *EX A P* and *P A*): "All official coinage was presumably made from metal owned by the Roman state and it is not obvious why certain issues should expressly admit this fact. (...) [The coins] were perhaps struck from the money left to the *populus Romanus* by Ptolemy Alexander I of Egypt, which probably arrived at Rome in the course of 86, and the unusual orgin of the issues was perhaps felt to be important enough to justify the addition of the legends (...)." Grueber (1910), vol. 1,324-32, proposed 85 BCE, Münzer (1917) 84 BCE, and Mommsen (1860), 592, no. 222, 87-81 BCE.

could soften Sulla's revenge. Unlike his patrician relative C. Julius Caesar, L. Julius Bursio apparently could not continue his political career under Sulla's dictatorship.

L. Julius Bursio used one coin-type. A slightly draped genius[54] with a laureated head and a wing adorned the obverse; a Victoria in a quadriga drawn by galloping horses, the reverse. The control marks suggest a conscious attempt "to control the use of obverse and reverse dies in relation to each other[55]." Bursio employed the headdress of Isis, the lotus, and the crocodile once and the *caduceus* twice as control marks. This leaves 114 of the 119 denarii of the British Museum collection with other symbols. Again, the employment of this specific Isis/Egypt-related symbols is very sparse.

L. Papius issued coins in 80 BCE, at a time when Sulla controlled the state[56]. Had he been a *popularis* or opponent of the dictator, he would not have been voted into or assigned a moneyership[57]. L. Papius employed the *situla* and *sistrum*, symbols that are easily assigned to Isis. But they were only two among a vast array of symbols L. Papius used and the percentage of the employment does not comprise more than 1%[58]. These control marks had neither religious nor political significance; they possessed only artistic meaning.

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[54] Grueber (1910), vol. 1, 324, n. 3: "No satisfactory explanation has been suggested of this pantheistic head in connection with the Julia gens." Mommsen (1860), 592 described the representation as "ein jugendlicher männlicher Kopf mit Lorbeerkranz."

[55] Crawford (1974), vol. 2, 588. He continued: "The whole issue of L. Julius Bursio forms a single sequence, produced in one workshop. Apparently a number of symbols was chosen and cut into the obverse dies with which it was intended to start the issue; when a die wore out it was replaced by one with the same symbol. Meanwhile the reverse dies were simply running through a series of different types of control-marks; but the way in which the obverse dies were replaced suggests that the mint was thinking in terms of the relationship of obverse and reverse dies."

[56] F. Münzer, "L. Papius," RE 36.2 (Stuttgart, 1949), 1077, no. 6 and Wiseman (1971), 249, no. 305. Mommsen (1860), 616, no. 252, opted for a range between 80 - 68 BCE. He thought it also possible that this L. Papius was the father of the homonymous moneyer L. Papius who became censor under Caesar.

[57] M. Crawford *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic* (London, 1985), 187: "(...) one of the lex Cornelia de XX quaestoribus was to ensure control of the staff of the treasury by the new regime, as well as to reorganize its working for the future. It is almost certain that when Sulla came to power he replaced the moneyers in office and organized the production (...)."

[58] Grueber (1910), vol. 2 put together a table of 119 symbols.

L. Papius had one coin type. He chose for the obverse a head of Juno Sospes wearing a goat's skin that was tied under her chin, for the reverse a galloping griffin. The choice of the obverse design could reveal the Lanuvian orgin of L. Papius. In his case there might have been a closer connection with Latium than with Samnium, as his *nomen gentile* on a burial inscription from Praeneste nicely supports this assumption[59].

P.F. Tschudin called attention to a denarius issued by C. Egnatius Maxsumus, moneyer in the mid 70's BCE[60]. This denarius depicts, on the obverse, a bust of Cupid and, on the reverse, a temple with lotus- or acanthus- capitals. Two figures stand inside the building[61]. Tschudin identified these figures, usually thought to be Jupiter and Libertas, as Isis and Sarapis. Since Egnatius' issues primarily depict Venus, and Venus and Isis can be equated, the choice of the reverse is not a thematical surprise[62]. It is simply a pendant to the obverse design. If the figures are really Isis and Sarapis, this coin would prove that not only a *collegium* but also a temple of Isis and Sarapis existed in Rome. The senatorial order of 48 BCE to destroy the precincts of a temple of Isis and Sarapis, which Dio reported[63], could then be related to this temple. In any case, Egnatius' coin, preceding M. Plaetorius Cestianus' Isis Panthea issue, confirms that fusions between acknowledged state deities and Isis and Sarapis had taken place.

L. Roscius Fabatus[64], moneyer in the late sixties BCE[65], had

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[59] *CIL* I 236.

[60] *Isis in Rom* (Diss. Aarau, 1962), 45, n. 62. F. Münzer, "C. Egnatius Maxsumus," *RE* 10.2 (Stuttgart, 1905), 1993, no. 2 and 1997, no. 27. R. Syme, "Missing Senators," Historia 4 (1955), 61: "On Cn. Egnatius Cn f. senator in 74, disinherited by his father for having taken bribes (...). The father (also a senator) is styled 'Cn. Egnatius pater,' which proves that their praenomina were identical (...). Therefore the son cannot be the same person as the moneyer C. Egnatius Cn. f. Cn n. Maximus (...). Moreover, the context shows that Cn. Egnatius the father had another son: the moneyer can therefore be dated, if so desired, later than 74." Crawford (1974), vol. 1, 405-6, n. 391, set the moneyership into the year 75 BCE as did Grueber (1910), vol. 1, 324, and Münzer (1905).

[61] Crawford (1974), vol. 2, 405, no. 391.2 (pl. XLIX) = E. A. Sydenham *The Coinage of the Roman Republic* (London, 1952), no. 788.

[62] J. G. Griffiths *Apuleius of Madauros. The Isis-Book (Metamorphoses, Book XI)*, *EPRO* 39 (Leiden, 1975), 343-4 outlines Tschudin's argument concerning the equation of the concept of Tychē-Isis - Aphrodite-Isis.

[63] *Hist.* 42.26.

[64] E. Groag, "L. Roscius Fabatus," *RE* Zweite Reihe 1.2 (Stuttgart, 1914), 1122-3, no. 15, Wiseman (1971), 256, no. 358, and R. Syme, "Senators, Tribes

a comparatively successful career under C. Julius Caesar. Probably as tribune, Roscius was one of the petitioners of the *lex Mamilia Roscia Peducaea Alliena Fabia* in 55 BCE[66]. Then, he presumably served as one of Caesar's legates in Gaul around 54 BCE[67] and became praetor in 49 BCE[68]. Cicero reported in one of his letters that Fabatus died at Mutina[69].

As moneyer Fabatus used the same obverse type as L. Papius. The reverse shows a standing, female figure and an upright serpent feeding from her dress. This conveys the Lanuvium spring ritual of lowering a virgin down into a snake infested grotto. Among the extensive assortment of control mark symbols are the headdress of Isis and the *sistrum*[70]. The control marks were placed on the obverse as well as the reverse with a usually successful attempt to match them. So we find as a control mark on one denarius the headdress on the obverse and on the reverse the forepart of a cow[71]. On another example we again find the headdress on the obverse, but a *sistrum* on the reverse[72]. These two coins represent the extent of the known occurrences of directly associative Isiac symbols. Indirect ones are the cornucopia matched with a rudder, a pygmy matched with a crane, and an ibis with an egg[73]. The picture of a stork on one side and a cage-like enclosure on the other nicely highlights how necessary control mechanisms could take on an elaborated artistic form[74].

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and Towns," *Historia* 13 (1964), 112-25 (especially pp. 112 and 124 on the Roscii, Lanuvium and their lead mines in the hinterland of Carthago Nova).

[65] Mommsen (1860), 644, n. 295, 74 - 50 BCE, Groag (1914) and Crawford (1974) 64 BCE.

[66] S. Ricobono *Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani* (Rome, 1941), vol. 1, 138-40 and *Dizionario epigrafico di antichità Romana*, ed. G. Cardinali, vol. 4, fasc. 20 (Rome, 1950), 722-3.

[67] Caes. *Gal.* 5.24.53 is unclear. J. and A. Linderski, "The Quaestorship of Marcus Antonius," Phoenix 28 (1974), 213-23, conclude (p. 214, n. 15) that "Roscius was probably a legate in 54 and in early 53 (...) or that in 54 he received the legionary command without any specific title and formally became a legate only in 53."

[68] Caes. *Civ.* 1.3.6, Cic. *ad Att.* 8.12.2, and D.C. *Hist.* 41.5.

[69] *Ad Fam.* 10.33.4.

[70] Grueber (1910), vol. 2 listed 109 symbols.

[71] *BMCRR* 3448. These designations refer to Grueber's work (1910), vol. 2.

[72] *BMCRR* 3449.

[73] *BMCRR* 3423, 3468, and 3446.

[74] *BMCRR* 3489.

The Isis Panthea issue of M. Plaetorius Cestianus furnishes the only acceptable numismatic employment of the figure of Isis. Alföldi's identification of the figure deserves our gratitude, for even Mommsen could only declare "it was not even possible to identify the individual depictions of deities[75]." Alföldi having first postulated and stressed the importance of the subaltern personnel of the mint in connection with the control marks contradicted his earlier assertions by making Cestianus solely responsible for the minting of this coin issued for the games honoring Magna Mater in 55 BCE. The fact that slaves had insulted the aristocracy during the same games a year before provided Alföldi with the necessary reasons for Cestianus' choice. In this scenario, Cestianus[76] simply picked up on the social conflict and revealed his political stand by issuing this coin type. The employment of the figure of Isis was only a logical consequence. Ancient authors had designated her as the demi-monde's favorite goddess and credited her with immense mass-appeal. Thus, a *popularis* could not have chosen better!

Alföldi's dating of the Isis Panthea coin causes also problems. There are several reasons that speak against 55 BCE. Cestianus had all coin types equipped with the legends *S C* or *EX S C* and added *AED CUR* on two. The use of five different types shows that Cestianus supervised a vast output of coins at a time the state needed them not so much for payment of games as for payment of war activities. The legends *S C* or *EX S C* leave no doubt that he had received a special commission from the Senate to issue coins. The *AED CUR* testify that he was *curule aedile* at the time. Cicero recorded that Plaetorius was one of the presiding judges of the *questio inter sicarios* that decided A. Cluentius Habitus' lot in 66 BCE[77]. Since judges of the *quaestiones* had, in great likelihood, aedilician rank, 66 BCE can easily stand as *terminus ante quem* and 55 BCE falls away as the year of Plaetorius' aedileship. Cicero provided another clue in establishing the exact year of Plaetorius' aedileship. In 69 BCE Cicero defended M. Fonteius, whom Plaetorius had accused of extortion[78]. There is no mention that Plaetorius, the aedile, had accused Fonteius; an accusation that came

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[75] Mommsen (1860), 623: "(...) es hat noch nicht einmal gelingen wollen die einzelnen Götterbilder gehörig zu bestimmen."

[76] Alföldi (1954), 30-1: "(...) ein Exponent des Crassus, dessen dunkle Machinationen in jenen Jahren so viel Unheil stifteten."

[77] *Clu.* 126.147.

[78] *Font.* 2.19, 36, and fragment 3 = Quint. *Inst. or.* 6.3.51.

a good three years after Fonteius had retired from his propraetorship of Transalpine Gaul. The trial gave Plaetorius exposure. On the basis of this evidence, the year of Plaetorius' aedileship was almost certainly 68 BCE.

Alföldi mentioned the fact that Cestianus issued Cybele Panthea coins together with Isis Panthea coins and drew valuable conclusions regarding the fusion of the deities. He correctly identified the iconographic type as Isis. This, in turn, points to a much earlier integration of Isis in Rome than previously thought[79]. This very fusion, and the fact that the depiction of Cybele and Isis Panthea were parallel issues, challenges the singular importance of Isis and of her adherents as opponents of the state. Cybele had an official position within the Roman pantheon since 204 BCE, and Isis shared many of her attributes. This realization, not a hidden political motif, brought about a depiction of Isis on a coin.

Vidman labeled Cestianus' action 'Isispropaganda' and wondered how *curule aediles* could propagate her since they had a senatorial mandate[80]. The task was to issue a certain number of coins according to the traditional guidelines; there was nothing objectionable about his use of a female deity. The choice of Isis would have possessed ulterior motives only as the patroness of the demi-monde and *multitudo*; but this she was not. Rather, Isis was a henotheistic mother-goddess, and as such very similar to Cybele.

As Vidman stated, Cestianus knew about the cult of Isis either through members of his *familia* or simply by the fact that the cult had had adherents in Rome at least since the time of Sulla. Thus, not only a handful of revolutionaries and cult adherents were acquainted with Isis, but other Romans and non-Romans living in and outside Rome as well. An easily expandable list of people who knew of Isis included: senators who had villas in Campania, where the cult had been established in the second century BCE, those who had their villa walls painted in the newest styles, and merchants who had contacts with Alexandria or Delos and came through the Italian port cities[81].

If this had not been the case, the use of Isis and Isis-related symbols on coin issues would have been meaningless. A *curule aedile*, who was interested in promoting himself, would never have

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[79] Alföldi (1954), 30-1.

[80] Vidman (1970), 103.

[81] M. Floriani Squarciapino *I culti orientali ad Ostia, EPRO* 3 (Leiden, 1962).

chosen a design that only a handful of people could understand. Even if the headdress with a lotus flower and the falling locks had not led to an identification with Isis, then it would have been with another female deity. Any possibility of a 'false' interpretation could not have been in the interest of revolutionaries since their prime interest must have been clarity in order to rally the masses.

We cannot establish with certainty whether or not M. Plaetorius Cestianus was a cult initiate. It is certain, however, that he was acquainted with Isis. The same must be true for at least some recipients of the Isis Panthea coins, if not the whole populace of Rome. Otherwise, M. Plaetorius' decision to have Isis Panthea on a coin would have been without purpose. A person's simple encounter with artistic representations of Egyptian motifs or practicing Isiacs in the capital or elsewhere would have sufficed to impart knowledge about Isis.

C. Calpurnius Piso Fugi, the son of L. Calpurnius, was the last to employ Isiac symbols[82]. His long list of various pictograms is as impressive as the one of his father, but, again, Isiac symbols occur sparingly. Moneyer in 64 BCE[83], C. Calpurnius issued vast amounts of coins and all were variations of the obverse and reverse types his father had used; namely, a head of Apollo on the obverse and a riding horseman on the reverse. As with other moneyers, the idea that C. Calpurnius or his staff used Isiac symbols to state or propagate their subversive ideas has no validity. The fact that L. Calpurnius had his son betrothed to Cicero's daughter Tullia in 67 BCE, and they were actually married in 63 BCE, should eliminate any suspicions of this moneyer as an exponent of revolutionary ideas, or as someone who allowed himself to be used towards such ends. After the moneyership, C. Calpurnius advanced to the quaestorship in 58 BCE. He died one year later, and what had begun as an exemplary political career of the descendant of an illustrious Roman senatorial family came to an abrupt end.

This examination has shown that the Isiac symbols such as the headdress, the *sistrum*, and the *situla*, as well as the more loosely related *caduceus* or *cornucopia*, can neither establish the involvement of the subaltern personnel of the Roman mint in a revolutionary movement, nor reveal the moneyers as opponents of the Roman

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[82] F. Münzer, "C. Calpurnius Piso Frugi," *RE* 5.2 (Stuttgart, 1897), 1391, no. 93.

[83] Mommsen (1860), 264-5, no. 264 thought 61 BCE as the latest date for C. Calpurnius' moneyership.

government. Isis' headdress, the *sistrum*, and the *situla* were control mark possibilities from a wide array of symbols whose meaning had to be sought in the artistic, not in the political, sphere.

The general layout of the coins' design or designs lay in the hands of the moneyer; design execution, in the hands of the engravers. Control marks, which made for a more efficient coordination of coin production, were part of the design and as such fell within the working sphere of the moneyer. He decided what kind of control marks should be employed. The engravers were artists and as such influenced by current artistic styles and movements. Isiac symbols were artistic components of the Pompeian-Campanian style or could have been imitations of Ptolemaic coin symbols. All of the moneyers discussed here had personal ties to Campania, southern Italy, or Lanuvium, where they were not only exposed to the relevant artistic fashion but also to the cult of Isis or Juno Sospes. What we in fact find in this numismatic evidence is additional testimony to changes in the artistic and intellectual world of Rome.

The numismatic material shows that Isiac symbols had been integrated into Roman art and that mentally a fusion between Isis and Cybele and other accepted Roman goddesses had taken place. The artistic integration of Isiac symbols involved a detachment from their specific cultic context and consequently a loss of their cultic meaning. Only a cult initiate could understand the actual religious meaning of symbols detached from their original context, but that reached no further than that individual's devotion. The Isis Panthea coin of M. Plaetorius Cestianus illustrates that the figure of Isis was a publicly acceptable iconographic representation. The congruent characteristics with Cybele were decisive for this. The importance of the Isis Panthea coin is that it is a Roman coin minted for Roman use.

6) A Roman Inscription from the First Century BCE

A funeral inscription from Rome's eighth district (*regio* VIII), the Capitoline region, confirms Apuleius' account of the existence of a cult association in Rome[84]. Although Degrassi dated the inscription to 58 BCE[85] and Malaise set it as late as 48 BCE[86], Coarelli most

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[84] *Met.* 11.30: "(...) sub illis Syllae temporibus conditi munia."

[85] *Doxa* 2 (1949): 69, *Scritti vari di antichità*, vol. 1 (Rome, 1962), 339 and *ILLRP* 159.

convincingly placed the inscription between 90 BCE and 60 BCE. He based his conclusion on a thorough examination of the onomastic evidence provided by the inscription as well as its stylistic characteristics[87].

> A. Caecili(us) A. l(ibertus) Olipor| Cn. Caecili A. [l(iberti)] Silonis| Caeci[li]a A. et Cn. l(iberta) Asia| A. Caecili A. Cn. l(iberti) Alexsandri|[5] Polla Caecilia Spuri [f(ilia)]| A. Cae[c]ili A. f(ilii) Pal(atina) Rufi| T. Sulpici T. f(ilii) {Caecili} sac(erdotis) Isid(is) Capitoli(nae)| Porcia T. l(iberta) Rufa {sac(erdos)} Sulpici {Capitoli(nae)}| T. Porcius T. f(ilius) Col(lina) Maxsimus|[10] T. Sulpicius T. l(ibertus) Primus| C. Valerius C. l(ibertus) [P]hilar[g]urus| Q. Lolius Q. [f(ilius) H]or(atia) Rufus| D. Aurelius D. l(ibertus) Stella (?)| H(oc) m(onumentum) <h>e(redes) non seq(uetur)[88]

The inscription lists thirteen names, nine of them in the nominative and four in the genitive[89]. The ten men and three women commemorated by this inscription belonged to six *gentes*: the Caecilia, Porcia, Sulpicia, Valeria, Lollia, and Aurelia. The patrician *gentes* Sulpicia and Valeria could trace their beginnings back to the founding of the Republic. The plebeian *gens* Caecilia went back as far as the fifth century BCE; the plebeian *gentes* Porcia and Aurelia, to the third century. These families had large contigents of *clientes* and freedmen. The *gens* Lollia forms an exception within this list of illustrious Roman families. The Lollii, an equestrian family of possibly non-Roman stock, received Roman citizenship only after the Social War[90].

Four men and two women were Caecilii[91], two men were Sulpicii[92], and one man and one woman were Porcii[93]. The remaining three men belonged to the families Valerii, Lollii, and

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[86] *Inventaire préliminaire des documents égyptiens découverts en Italie, EPRO* 21 (Leiden, 1972), 184-7, especially p. 186.

[87] Coarelli (1984), primarily pp. 464-6.

[88] *SIRIS* 377 = *CIL* I^2 1263 = VI 2247 = *ILS* 4405 = *ILLRP* 159. The inscription, although found outside the *porta Ostiensis*, was assigned to the region of the *forum Romanum* (*regio* VIII). Unfortunately, it is now lost. On the regions of ancient Rome see F. Castagnoli *Topografia di Roma antica* (Turin, 1980).

[89] The names in the genitive were most likely added later to the list.

[90] F. Münzer, "Lollius," RE 13 (Stuttgart, 1927), 1375.

[91] A. Caecilius Olipor, Cn. Caecilius Silonis, Caecilia Asia, A. Caecilius Alexsander, Polla Caecilia, and A. Caecilius Rufus.

[92] T. Sulpicius and T. Sulpicius Primus.

[93] Porcia Rufa and T. Porcius Maxsimus.

Aurelii[94]. Eight of the thirteen listed, six men and two women, were *liberti*[95] and the remaining five, four men and one woman, were *ingenui*[96]. This majority of freedmen over freeborn should not lead to the conclusion that the cult especially attracted Rome's socially disadvantaged. Several facts speak against such a conclusion. All of the listed persons were Roman citizens and were connected with prominent Roman families. They belonged to an association which had the financial means to have a funeral monument produced and then placed in the religious and political center of Rome. It should also be added that the funeral inscription itself stands for the achieved cultural assimilation of the persons as well as the cult of Isis.

The distribution of *ingenui* and *liberti* among the families was as follows: four of the Caecilii were *liberti* (three men and one woman), and two were *ingenui* (one man and one woman). One of the two Sulpicii was an *ingenuus*. The other was a *libertus*. The same distribution applies to the Porcii. The woman was a *liberta* and the man an *ingenuus*. Two of the remaining three men were *liberti*, and the other was *ingenuus*. Three of the four male *ingenui* added their tribal affiliation. A. Caecilius Rufus belonged to the *tribus Palatina*, T. Porcius Maxsimus to the *tribus Collina*, and Q. Lollius Rufus to the *tribus Horatia*. If the reading of Stella (?) after the name of the freedman D. Aurelius is correct, then he was assigned to the *tribus Stellatina* and was the only *libertus* with the addition of a tribal affiliation[97]. Freedmen were usually assigned to the four urban tribes and only in exceptional cases to the more highly valued rural tribes[98]. This might be the reason for the addition. The only *ingenuus* without a tribal affiliation is T. Sulpicius. Clearly, the reference to the priesthood must have had priority. Whether he belonged to the *tribus Lemonia* along with other Sulpicii cannot securely be established.

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[94] C. Valerius Philargurus, Q. Lollius Rufus, and D. Aurelius.

[95] A. Caecilius Olipor, Cn. Caecilius Silonis, Caecilia Asia, A. Caecilius Alexsander, Porcia Rufa, T. Sulpicius Primus, C. Valerius Philargurus, and D. Aurelius.

[96] Polla Caecilia, A. Caecilius Rufus, T. Sulpicius Caecilius, T. Porcius Maxsimus, and Q. Lollius Rufus.

[97] On tribes see Th. Mommsen *Römisches Staatsrecht* vol. 3 (Leipzig, 1887), 161-198 and L. Ross Taylor *The Voting Districts of the Roman Republic* (Rome, 1960).

[98] S. Treggiari *Roman Freedmen During the Late Republic* (Oxford, 1969), 41-52.

The central position of the names of the freeborn T. Sulpicius[99] and the freedwoman Porcia Rufa in the inscription highlights their leading position in the cult. Their names appear in line seven and eight in the fourteen-line-long inscription. Both were *sacerdotes Isidis Capitolinae* and the only ones with an indication of their cultic office. The position of Porcia Rufa, with great probability the wife of T. Sulpicius, shows that a lower social status did not affect cultic promotion. In fact, the various levels of the Roman social order were meaningless inside the cultic organization since the cult employed its own rules of designation. Instead, it was the levels of introduction into the mystery and the need to fill various positions which were decisive[100]. Further, T. Sulpicius and Porcia Rufa did not presumably hold the office of *sacerdos* simultaneously, since the former name is in the genitive (and probably a later addition) and the latter in the nominative; note also that the position rotated yearly. A jointly held priesthood, according to Vidman, is only, and then not with any convincing certainty, confirmed twice in Pannonia superior during the Principate[101].

This inscription nicely illustrates the *familia* character of the cult association, an important factor in the discussion of cult and *collegium* connections. Members of the *gens Caecilia* congregated predominantly around the priestess Porcia Rufa and the priest T. Sulpicius. The list makes possible an even more refined outline of the family structure of these Caecilii. Although the most common *praenomen* for a freedman of the *gens* Caecilia was Aulus[102], the most frequently used *praenomina* for freeborn Caecilii not of slave stock were Quintus and Lucius[103]. This observation and the knowledge of 1) a *tresuir monetalis*, possibly a son of the plebeian aedile of 189 BCE, with the *praenomen* Aulus, 2) the funerary stele of an A. Caecilius *filius* or *libertus* of a Quintus on Delos, and 3) a dedication of a *Mercurialis* L. Caecilius, possibly a *libertus* of the previous Aulus, in the Agora on Delos supports Coarelli's hypothesis that all

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[99] T. Sulpicius' *cognomen* Caecilius is highly questionable.

[100] On the various positions in the cultic organization see Vidman (1970), 51-65.

[101] *SIRIS* 654 = *CIL* III 4015 and *SIRIS* 661 = *CIL* III 4156. Vidman (1970), 51 and see discussion Chapter 5.

[102] *Der Kleine Pauly* Band 1 (Stuttgart, 1964).

[103] Coarelli (1984), 465. See also O. Salomies *Die römischen Vornamen: Studien zur römischen Namengebung, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum* 82 (1987), 197-200.

evidence points to the second century BCE[104]. This leaves only Spurius, the father of Polla Caecilia, without an explanation[105]. Polla Caecilia herself could be identified as the dedicator of a late Republican inscription to Isis and Sarapis in Thessalonike[106].

A. Caecilius Olipor, freedman of an Aulus, heads the list. His *cognomen*, a compound formed from Oli (from Aulus) and por (*puer*), belonged to the largest group of slave names "formed with the termination -por[107]." Cn. Caecilius Silo was either a freedman of Olipor or just like him a freedman of Aulus Caecilius. The latter might be more reasonable, especially in view of Caecilia Asia and A. Caecilius Alexsander, *liberti* of Olipor and Silo. The joint possession and manumission of slaves is in itself an interesting fact. Polla Caecilia, as mentioned above, falls outside this specific family tree. A. Caecilius Rufus, on the other hand, could very well be Olipor's son.

While T. Sulpicius' dubious *cognomen* might hint at a possible family connection with the Caecilii, Porcia Rufa is without such a link. As with the *praenomen* Aulus, the *praenomen* Titus for the Sulpicii and the Porcii was rare. Coarelli noted though that the name T. Sulpicius appears in an inscription from Capua and T. Porcius in inscriptions from Delos from 151 BCE onward[108]. The cult connection of T. Sulpicius Primus, freedman of Sulpicius Caecilius, and the freeborn T. Porcius Maxsimus can be established through the two *sacerdotes*, which only leaves the last three persons listed in the inscription without a detectable family relationship to the others. Hence, besides the *familia* and religious motive another reason must have bound the group together.

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[104] Coarelli (1984), nn. 25-7 with reference to Crawford (1974) and G. Hatzfeld, "Les Italiens résidant à Délos mentionnés dans les inscriptions de l'île," *BCH* 36 (1912).

[105] Salomies (1987), 52-5 on the name Spurius and the confusion between the name and the adjective.

[106] Coarelli (1984), n. 29 with reference to G. Manganaro's "Nuove dediche con impronte di piedi alle divinita Egizia," *ArchCl* 16 (1964), 291-2, especially p. 292 and G. Hatzfeld *Les trafiquants italiens dans l'Orient hellénique* (Paris, 1919), 100, no. 2.

[107] I. Kajanto *The Latin Cognomina, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum* 36.2 (Helsinki, 1965), 22.

[108] Coarelli (1984), 466.

C. Valerius Philargurus and D. Aurelius do not reveal any immediately useful information[109]. An ancestor of Q. Lollius' family provides an interesting fact though. A *Mercurialis* M. Lollius, son of Quintus, is listed among the dedicators of the Sarapeion on Delos around 150 BCE[110]. Malaise has shown that the island Delos was of great imprtance in the diffusion of the cult of Isis and Sarapis. The sack of the island by one of Mithridates' generals in 88 BCE, however, did not preclude but only intensified the cult's spread. The connection between *collegia* of merchants on Delos and in Rome could have caused an introduction of the cult before 88 BCE. If we equate, as Coarelli did, the adjective qualifying Isis in the inscription with the *Capitolini*, then we would have a provable link between the *Mercuriales* and the cult of Isis. According to Coarelli, the introduction of the cult of Isis in Rome ought to be seen in connection with the *collegium Capitolinorum*, i.e. the college of slave merchants[111]. The final word on this inscription has not been spoken, particularly since Coarelli's hypothesis is based on a singular link, namely, that an ancestor of Q. Lollius, a *Mercuralis*, had put up a dedication in the Delian Sarapeion. However, until further evidence surfaces, Coarelli's explanation remains the best available.

7) Senatorial Actions Against the Cult

The primary reason for the senatorial actions against the cult in 58, 53 and 48 BCE was neither the protection of the state from a cult with loose morals nor the defense of the *mores maiorum*. The true reason has to be sought in the political sphere. In this period the Senate had ceased to act as a single, coherent body, and individuals struggled to establish themselves over others. The sporadic actions against the cult of Isis have to be seen in this light. They were attempts to restore social cohesiveness, or, in Roman terms, the *pax*

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[109] Coarelli (1984), 466 points to an inscription from the Capitoline region in the area of the *arx* (*CIL* VI 30998 = *ILS* 4386) of the early Principate in which a V. Valerius Chaereas and his son put up a bust of Sarapis *ex arg*|*(enti) p(ondo) X ex uiso*| *colleg*[*io* ---]. "Anche se l'iscrizione (...) essa costituisce una notevole testimonianza sia del rapporto esistente tra un *collegium* (...) e il culto egiziano del Campidoglio (...)."

[110] Hatzfeld (1912), 47.

[111] Coarelli (1984), 466-71 (critique on Malaise's working thesis on p. 466). On the various *collegia* see J.-P. Waltzing *Étude historique sur les corporations professionelles chez les Romains* 4 vls. (Leiden, 1895).

hominum and, because of the reciprocal relationship between mankind and gods, the *pax deorum*. This was the guarantee for Rome's social stability and its supremacy. In concrete sociopolitical terms this meant the reinforcement of the authoritative status quo. The transitional character of this period heightened the sense of urgency; this pattern of response is comparable to 204 and 186 BCE.

All the relevant literary passages concerning these actions against the cult are later accounts. A letter of Cicero to his friend Atticus was thought to be the only exception[112], but the relevant passage has suffered in the manuscript tradition and relies on a conjecture, which does not hold up under further analysis. Varro's account of the consular action against the Egyptian gods in 58 BCE survived only in Tertullian's *Ad Nationes*[113]. Dio Cassius, whose major work is an annalistic account of Rome's history from the beginnings to 229 CE, recorded the senatorial actions of 53 and 48 BCE[114].

Valerius Maximus, a collector of anecdotes during Tiberius' reign, remarked how the consul L. Aemilius Paullus singlehandedly beat in the doors of a temple of Isis with an axe[115]. Scholars, with the exception of Coarelli[116], have placed this event in 50 BCE. Since a L. Aemilius Paullus was consul in 50 BCE and ancient authors had recorded similar actions against the cult of Isis at that time, the year 50 BCE seemed securely established. Coarelli, however, noticed that Valerius Maximus spoke in this chapter of happenings preceding the first century BCE, and that an action placed in 50 BCE would fall outside the author's chosen time frame. Even the fact that the text is an epitome does not hamper this assumption; to the contrary, it highlights the chronological order. In addition, Dio Cassius, who recorded the events of 53 and 48 BCE, did not mention such an incident against the cult in 50 BCE. Illustrious and homonymous ancestors of L. Aemilius Paullus, consul of 50 BCE, held the consulship in 219, 216, 182, and 168 BCE. On the basis of these observations, Coarelli placed the destruction of the temple doors in the first half of the second century BCE, which places it within Valerius Maximus' chosen time frame: the second century BCE. According to Coarelli, this would mean that a

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[112] *Ad. Att.* 2.17.2.

[113] 1.10.

[114] *Hist.* 40.47 and 42.26.

[115] 1.3.4.

[116] Coarelli (1984), 463.

sanctuary of Isis and Sarapis had existed in Rome before the much-cited establishment of a *collegium pastophorum* during Sulla's time.

This hypothesis demands careful examination since it contradicts all other scholarly views. Rome's ascent to become the predominant power in the Mediterranean world was accompanied by a confrontation with, and an acculturation of, new ideas and new cultural assets. The Ptolemaic cult of Isis and Sarapis had made its way from Alexandria into the Roman sphere of comprehension. The playwright Ennius would not have mentioned *Isiaci coniectores* among *augures*, *haruspices*, *astrologi*, and *interpretes somniorum* in his *Telamo*[117] if they had been unknown to his audience. Although this alone does not prove the existence of a temple of Isis and Sarapis in Rome or its immediate vicinity before the first century BCE, it does support Coarelli's earlier dating.

A move against the cult of Isis and Sarapis in 182 BCE falls within the pattern of defusing a possible trouble spot rather than attempting to eliminate a foreign cult. It was not unlike the Bacchanalia prohibition only four years earlier. The Senate recognized the danger of large gatherings that escaped state supervision and tried to control them by restraining or eliminating them inside Rome or in Rome's sphere of interest. There was also a political-religious dimension: the maintenance of order and guarantee of supremancy through the appeasement of the established deities. The motive for an action against the cult of Isis in 168 BCE would not have been different. Its preference over 182 BCE could only be based on the fact that the most famous of the Aemilii, the victor of Pydna, was then at the height of his politcal career. The thought of him moving against an *externa superstitio* is certainly appealing, but not verifiable.

A closer look at the text of Valerius Maximus reveals some interesting points:

> L. Aemilius Paulus consul, cum senatus Isidis et Serapidis fana diruenda censuisset, eaque nemo opificum adtingere auderet, posita praetexta securem arripuit templique eius foribus inflixit[118].

Aemilius Paullus, as one of the highest Roman magistrates, ensured that the Senate's decision to have the sanctuaries of Isis and Sarapis destroyed was carried out. The workers did not dare to touch the

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[117] *The Tragedies of Ennius* ed. H.D. Jocelyn (Cambridge, 1969), 127-8, frg. 134 and pp. 396-7. See Coarelli (1984), 462 for a short but relevant bibliography.

[118] 1.3.4.

building. Since they would normally not oppose the order of a consul such defiance can most easily be explained as religious fear either of Isis and Sarapis, or of divine wrath at the breaking of a contract. Aemilius was subject to neither fear. He laid down his insignia, seized an axe and beat in the temple doors. As a simple citizen (*posita praetexta*) he symbolically executed the senatorial order by beating in the doors. The destruction of the doors hardly constituted a thorough destruction of the temple. However, the presence of *opifices* suggests that the temple was still under construction, unless their *collegium* was beyond the working contract associated with the cult.

The text does not reveal where this temple was located. Inferring from the senatorial reaction, one has to consider an area in Rome's sphere of interest. The *lex parieti faciendo* of 105 BCE from Puteoli[119] is the oldest testimony for a temple of Sarapis in Italy before the date of the inscription. Even in Pompeii, a temple of Isis existed before the founding of a Roman colony there in 80 BCE[120]. The text only confirms that the *fana Isidis et Serapidis* lay within the senatorial sphere of interest. This could be anywhere Rome exercised political and military control. The hypothesis of a Campanian location crumbles especially in light of the inscription from the Capitoline region and Dio's account of the later senatorial actions against the cult: both point to Rome.

Although the passage survives only in an epitomized form, the omission of geographical detail might be further proof that these sanctuaries were in Rome. A consular action against a foreign cult still had the greatest religious and political effect in the capital. This was clear to any Roman and did not need any explanation. Had it happened outside Rome, then the destruction of the temple doors would have required some further elaboration simply because the purpose of the consular action would have been obscure.

The text is clearer on the architectural layout of the temple. The *fana Isidis et Serapidis* were part of one structure[121] whose layout might have been similar to the temples we know from Delos or Rome[122]. The scale of this early Roman structure should, however, not be compared with the latter two.

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[119] *CIL* I² 698 = X 1781 = *ILS* 5317 = *ILLRP* 518 = *SIRIS* 497.

[120] Tran tam Tinh (1964), 30-1.

[121] Aemilius Paullus beat in the *templi eius foribus*.

[122] A. Roullet *The Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, *EPRO* 20 (Leiden, 1972), figs. 348 (Isis Campensis) and 350 (Delos C).

A passage in Cicero's letter to his friend Atticus in early May of 59 BCE, restored by Ziehen[123], provides further evidence for the Senate's deep dislike of the cult of Isis. It is not surprising that scholars focusing their research on Isis tend to accept the conjecture, and others approaching the letter from the philological side opt for the transmitted text fully knowing its limitations. Most likely, however, Cicero referred neither to a literary piece, written by an otherwise unknown Curius and entitled 'Phocis,' that turned out to be a stage flop[124], nor to the destruction of an Isis statue belonging to Q. Curius[125]. A closer look at the historical context and the text itself will show that Ziehen was right in proposing a conjecture but wrong in suggesting an Isiac connection.

Realpolitik among the powerful with their huge *clientelae*, which resulted in the formation of the First (so-called) Triumvirate, marginalized the statesman Cicero. His ideas about a *consensus bonorum omnium* and a *concordia ordinum* were merely idealistic wishes[126]. Trying to remain true to his ideas and a political system that had ceased to function, Cicero refused to support the political *amicitia* of Pompey, Crassus and Caesar. While he needed them, these three men did not need the support of a *nouus homo*.

In this letter, Cicero did not shy away from attacking Pompey and accusing him of attempting to gather absolute power. Although Pompey's reputation was waning, the *imperator's* opinion was important to Cicero. Only he (Pompey) could provide him with access to those with real political power. The satisfaction that Pompey's services to the state would not be judged worthier than his own could not temper Cicero's sheer frustration with the politically fading Pompey, whom he labeled 'Sampsiceramus' and 'Arabarches.' Sampsiceramus, the ruler of Hemesea in Syria, whom Pompey had confirmed in his position, and the Arabarches, the prefects of the

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[123] Ziehen (1898), 341-2 replaced "iacet enim ille sic ut phocis Curiana stare uideatur" with "ut prae hoc Isis Curiana stare uideatur." D.R. Shackleton-Bailey *Cicero's Letters to Atticus*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1965), 365, n. 8 stated that there is "no point in textual changes which only substitute a different riddle."

[124] Ziehen (1898) with reference to Horace's remark (*Ep.* 2.1.176) "securus cadat an recto stat fabula talo". The meaning of *stare* and *iacere* in connection with theater p. 341.

[125] O. Seeck, "Zur Geschichte des Isiskultes in Rom," *Hermes* 43 (1908), 642-3.

[126] H. Strasburger *Concordia ordinum. Eine Untersuchung zur Politik Ciceros* (Leipzig, 1931).

region between the Thebaid and the Red Sea[127], depended on higher authorities. The irony is clear. The man who had successfully and independently forged Rome's military politics in the Near East was now binding and subjecting himself to inferior men. The consequent loss of reputation was inevitable. Compared to Pompey's reputation, anything else seemed highly reputable - at least in Cicero's opinion.

Ziehen's conjecture, *ut prae hoc Isis Curiana stare uideatur*, provides ample food for thought. O. Seeck connected the attribute Curiana with Q. Curius, who fits the popular image of an adherent of Isis. Known as *notissimus aleator*[128], Curius had been expelled from the Senate in 70 BCE for his un-senatorial behavior and joined Catilina. With the help of his lover Fulvia[129], like Clodia a fallen woman, Curius got in contact with Cicero and turned senatorial informer. He revealed the plot and implicated Caesar[130]. The destruction of a private statue at a time when political authority and power lay in the hands of three individuals and not the Senate excludes moral reasons. The cleansing of foreign cults from Roman religion or the upholding of the *mos maiorum* were not the issues. The impulse for the destruction of Curius' statue would have been a personal, political statement, and would have come from C. Julius Caesar, the master manipulator. As *pontifex maximus* and consul of the year 59 BCE, such an action on his part would have fallen within the legal framework provided by his religious and magisterial positions. Taking such revenge on a previously annoying but now uninteresting figure would have hinted at the legal powers at his disposal.

Cicero realized that Pompey had given himself to Caesar because he was eager to retain and enlarge his power and reputation. Cicero understood the vulnerability of the course chosen by Pompey. A certain exaggeration on Cicero's part is not surprising in view of his need to rely on the success of the general. It was clear to Cicero that

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[127] W. Dittenberger *OGI* 1, no. 202.

[128] Q. Asconius *Pediani Orationum Cicerionis quinque enarratio*, ed. A.C. Clark (Oxford, 1907), 93: "Curius hic notissimus fuit aleator, damnatusque postea est. In hunc est hendecasyllabus Calui elegans: et talos Curius pereruditus." Sal. *Cat.* 23.1 and App. *BC* 2.3.

[129] The family came from Tusculum.

[130] Suet. *Caes.* 17: "Recidit rursus in discrimen aliud inter socios Catilinae nominatus (...) in senatus a Quinto Curio, cui, quod primus consilia coniuratorum detexerat, constituta erant praemia."

Pompey, like Curius, would fall flat if he irritated Caesar. In contrast to the unimportant Curius, Pompey would really suffer.

The reading of the '*is*' as '*Isis*' is, however, not necessary, and it relies upon the questionable notion that primarily immoral people embraced Isis. *Lis*, which Ziehen also suggested but dismissed, makes more sense: *iacet enim ille sic ut prae hoc lis Curiana stare uideatur*. The *lis Curiana*, the Curian dispute, revolved around the issue of whether Caesar's name had been on the list of Catilinian conspirators or not. And, consequently, whether Q. Curius was right in accepting a state reward or not. Q. Curius' bad reputation made his testimony questionable regardless of the fact that it might have helped to save the state. In contrast to Curius stands Pompey, who despite his achievements and integrity, was helping in the dismantling of the state. In Cicero's exaggerated view, touched by sarcasm and desperation, Pompey, the embodiment of a true Roman, is the failure and Curius, the pure antithesis, the success. This conjecture is, because of its various layers, much more appealing than the transmitted text; moreover, put into the proper historical context it does not pose an unsolvable riddle.

The view that this possible action was devised to hold P. Clodius Pulcher, who had found among the Isiacs willing proponents of his cause, in check has a major flaw. It is hard to imagine that Caesar, who had made possible Clodius' adoption and his transformation into a plebeian, would have reprimanded him in the same year. Caesar was too shrewd a politician to give Clodius a chance to obstruct his (Caesar's) own political ambitions. Even if a group of Isiacs were attached to Clodius, the destruction of an Isis statue would not have been enough to upset the profitable political relationship between Caesar and Clodius. The crushing of a statue representing a deity had symbolic meaning. It showed power and superiority over the owner and the deity, who had permitted the destruction of its representation.

The interpretation of the senatorial decision of 58 BCE forbidding the construction of altars on the Capitol as a sweeping persecution campaign against the cult of Isis is erroneous. Tertullian, quoting Varro, recorded the senatorial decree[131]. The situation before

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[131] *Ad. Nat.* 1.10: "Serapem et Isidem et Arpocratem et Anubem prohibitos Capitolio Uarro commemorat eorumque aras a senatu deiectas per uim popularium restitutas. sed tamen et Gabinius consul Kalendis Januaris, cum uix hostias probaret prae popularium coetu, quia nihil de Serapide et Iside constituisset, potiorem habuit senatus censuram quam impetum uulgi et aras institui prohibuit."

January 1, 58 BCE was that despite the prohibition and previous destruction of altars of Sarapis, Isis, Harpocrates, and Anubis on the Capitol, they had been rebuilt *per uim popularium*. The senatorial opinion stood against the actions of the people, maybe more precisely the inhabitants of the Capitoline region. The barring of a *coitio illicita* from an area of great religious importance to the Roman state religion is not surprising. The *uulgus*, however, demanded from Gabinius[132], consul of 58 BCE, reinstatement of the Egyptian deities. This they did shortly after he had inspected the sacrifices, which constituted the first act of his consulship. The Roman religious system would have allowed an integration of these deities and their cults, but it was the sole right of the Senate to make such a decision. The *uulgus* could not force it, especially not shortly after an important religious act. The danger of jeopardizing the well-being of the state was too great.

The view that Clodius had incited his followers, among whom were adherents of Isis and Sarapis bound to the cult's Capitoline *collegium*, to disrupt the official haruspicies makes no sense. Both consuls, A. Gabinius and L. Calpurnius Piso, officially supported P. Clodius Pulcher, the tribune of the plebs, until March 58 BCE. His *lex Clodia de prouinciis* assigned Piso the governorship of Macedonia, while Cilicia and then Syria were allotted to Gabinius. It was not until the end of March that Pompey forced Gabinius over to his side. Caesar's absence from Rome allowed Pompey to move against Clodius, who was fed up with the latter's continuous attacks against him. Pompey's action, however, had no political impact. Clodius went on to force Cicero into exile and removed Cato, another conservative politician, from Rome. Clodius had successfully suggested Cato as *quaestor pro praetore* to bring about the annexation of Cyprus. Although Rome's adversary Ptolemy committed suicide and the expedition's accounts were lost on the voyage home, Cato did not suffer a loss in reputation. If Clodius had thought of being able to accuse Cato of misconduct upon his return, the lack of records and an unblemished, ever increasing reputation of fairness shielded Cato from possible accusation.

Meanwhile the political conditions in Rome worsened. Pompey, exasperated by Clodius' increasingly violent attacks, retreated to 'private life.' Cicero's return from exile in early September 57 BCE and the organization of a rival gang under the leadership of T.

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[132] On Gabinus, like Pompey a *dux Sullani*, see E. Badian, "The Early Career of A. Gabinius (cos. 58 B.C.)," *Philologus* 103 (1959), 87-99.

Annius Milo brought Pompey out of his internal exile, but could not incite him to challenge Caesar or Crassus. The three met at Luca and agreed to reforge their *amicitia*. Politically this meant that Caesar was to continue his conquest of Gaul. Pompey and Crassus were the designated consuls for 55 BCE and would receive respectively the two Spains and Syria as their provinces for five years. No politician in Rome could as yet oppose these decisions.

Crassus left Rome for Syria before the end of the year 55 BCE and Pompey was left in control of the capital. He even controlled Hispania citerior and ulterior through legates. The death of Pompey's wife Julia in 54 BCE and Pompey's refusal to continue a marriage alliance not only threatened the existence of the Triumvirate, but also intensified the continuous political crisis of the state. Scandals involving Caesar and Gabinius delayed the consular elections of 54 BCE. Thus, Cn. Domitius Calvinus and M. Valerius Messalla Rufus took office in July instead of January 53 BCE. The elections under their auspices for the consulships of 52 BCE were hampered and Pompey emerged as the winner. Rome's defeat and Crassus' death at Carrhae only added to the desperate political condition of the state. The prospects for 52 BCE were dismal. Milo's murder of Clodius accelerated the disintegration of state order and an open clash between the two remaining *triumuiri* was only a question of time.

The portents for 52 BCE recorded by Dio Cassius[133] signaled disaster. In his opinion, the Senate's decree at the close of the previous year to tear down privately built temples of Isis and Sarapis was as bad an omen for 52 BCE as all the others. Dio acknowledges that the senators had simply unknowingly offended these gods[134], yet their action forged an additional link in the chain of ill omens. He included this decree in his list of portents because in his world of the early third century, Isis and Sarapis were fully integrated state deities presenting the archetype of the imperial couple. Consequently, an order to destroy temples of Isis and Sarapis could only be interpreted as a sign of the disintegration of the *pax deorum et Romanorum*.

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[133] Hist. 40.47. These portents were: the market held on every ninth day coincided with January 1, an owl was seen and caught in the city, a statue perspired for three days, a meteor darted from the south to the east, and thunderbolts, stones, and blood flew through the air.

[134] *Hist.* 40.47. Dio about the fate of the cult in Rome: "(...) *καὶ ὅτε γε καὶ ἐξενίκησεν ὥστε καὶ δημοσίᾳ αὐτοὺς σέβεσθαι, ἔξω τοῦ πωμηρίου σφᾶς ἱδρύσαντο.*"

Dio revealed neither the reason for the senatorial order, nor if it was actually carried out. Dio's choice of the vague τινές speaks against a senatorial campaign aimed at politically annoying opponents. It is clear that these individuals possessed both the funds and the real estate to build such shrines. The literary accounts that provide geographical data and the inscription from the eighth region, discussed above, point to the Capitoline region. Thus, the presence of unofficial deities inside the *pomerium* emerges as an extremely plausible reason for the senatorial decree. We have only to recall the political situation of the final months of 53 BCE. In the Roman mind, everything pointed to an instability of the divine equilibrium. The *pomerium* was theoretically reserved for officially recognized deities and the introduction of unauthorized ones disturbed the equilibrium among the gods themselves, and between the gods and mankind. In concrete sociopolitical terms, this meant for the Senate the loss of an additional sphere of influence. This was a loss which it could not afford at that time.

The omens for 48 BCE, the year of Pompey's murder in Egypt, and the emergence of Caesar as dictator naturally indicated the worst:

> (...) bees had settled next to a statue of Heracles in the Capitoline region. (Since rites (*sacra*) for Isis happened to take place (or cult-images or -objects of Isis happended to be) there at that time[135],) the soothsayers were of the opinion that the precincts of the temples of Isis and Sarapis had to be razed to the ground once more. A temple of Bellona was accidently destroyed in the course of the destruction and jars full of human flesh were found[136].

The soothsayers' deduction is clear. The appearance of the bees indicated trouble for the present state order. The cause for their coming was the presence of foreign, unofficial deities and their cult

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[135] W. Dindorf suggested the elimination of this sentence. Maybe because the τεμενίσματα seem a paraphrase of ἱερά. The ἱερὰ ἐτύγχανε ἐνταῦθα τότε γιγνόμενα were, however, not places of worship. The ἱερά should be translated analogous to Dio's employment of the word in the passage where he relates Octavian's decree of 28 BCE (*Hist.* 53.2.4) as rites (*sacra*) or sacred things (cult-images or -objects).

[136] D. C. *Hist.* 42.26: "καὶ μέλισσαι ἐν τῷ Καπιτωλίῳ παρὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέα ἱδρύθησαν. <καὶ> (ἐτύγχανε γὰρ ἱερὰ Ἴσιδι ἐνταῦθα τότε γιγνόμενα) ἔδοξε γνώμῃ τῶν μάντεων πάντα αὖθις τά τε ἐκείνης καὶ τὰ τοῦ Σαράπιδος τεμενίσματα κατασκάψαι· γενομένου δὲ τούτου καὶ Ἐννεῴων τι λαθόν σφας προσκαθηρέθη, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ κεράμια ἀνθρωπείων σαρκῶν μεστὰ εὑρέθη."

inside the *pomerium*. Thus, the sanctuaries of the foreign deities had to be destroyed. The meaning of human flesh in the temple of Bellona, the personification of War, does not require an explanation. Despite their celebrated diligence and industry, bees could be a sign of bad luck in certain places and at certain times[137]. In this instance, they surfaced in close proximity to the central religious area of Rome next to a statue of Hercules. The main temple of Bellona in Rome was east of the temple of *Apollo Medicus Sosianus* in the vicinity of the *circus Flaminius*[138]. The *templum Herculis Custodis* and the *templum Herculis et Musarum* were in this area as well. The former had been built in regal times and restored by Sulla. The latter, built by M. Fulvius Nobilior in 187 BCE, stood in the ninth region[139]. Several other temples of Hercules were located near the Capitol, in the city's ninth and eleventh regions[140]. An *aedes Bellonae Rufiliae*, known only from a funeral inscription for a priest (labeled *fanaticus*), might have stood in *regio III*[141]. Regionary catalogues call this region *Isis et Sarapis*, probably taking its name from a temple of Isis and Sarapis (most likely the *Isium Metellinum*) situated next to the *via Labicana*[142]. With the present archaeological data available, it makes most sense to identify the *aedes Bellonae Rufiliae* as the *Enueion*, which was accidentally destroyed.

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[137] D. Glock *Symbolik der Biene* (Heidelberg, 1891). The appearance of bees was generally seen as a threatening sign. See, for example, Cic. *De Har. Resp.* 25, Liv. 21.46.2, 24.10.11, 27.23.4, Luc. 7.161, Plin. *Nat.* 11.55, Val. Max. 1.6.13, and Verg. *A.* 7.64-5. Had the soothsayers have known that the hieroglyph of a bee referred to the pharaoh, then this trouble could have been interpreted as the emergence of a sole ruler, i.e. C. Julius Caesar. Ammelianus Marcellinus, 17.4.11, noted this meaning of the hieroglyph in his description of the obelisk placed in the *circus maximus*.

[138] L. Richardson, Jr. *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore and London, 1992), 57.

[139] Roughly northwest of the Capitol on the west side of the *circus Flaminius*.

[140] Rome's oldest Hercules sanctuary, the *templum Herculis Uictoris*, and Pompey's temple to Hercules, the *aedes Herculis Pompeiani*, were located south of the Capitol in the eleventh region of the city. Both approximately northwest of the *circus maximus*. On the various temples of Hercules in Rome see F. Coarelli *Guida archeologica di Roma* (Rome, 1974), Richardson (1992), and on the cult of Hercules M. Jaczynowska, "Le culte de l'Hercule romain au temps du Haute Empire," *ANRW* II 17.2 (Berlin and New York, 1981), 631-61.

[141] Richardson (1992), 58.

[142] Richardson (1992), 212 and S.B. Platner *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, ed. Th. Ashby (Rome, 1965), 285.

There were other sanctuaries of Isis and Sarapis in Rome. One was located in the area of the *arx*[143] close to the *aedes Iunonis Monetae*[144]. Apuleius' often repeated statement that Lucius "happily fulfilled the duties of the ancient college, which was founded in the time of the Dictator Sulla" suggests that the 'ancient college' was bound to the temple in the *campus Martius* and not to the one on the Capitoline hill. Lucius waited to be initiated as priest of *Isis Campensis* and not *Capitoliensis*. Nothing would speak against the possibility that the first official temple of Isis and Sarapis was a replacement or an enlargement of an earlier edifice. Places of worship could also have stood on private property, which surrounded, with the exception of the area towards the *forum Romanum*, the Capitol[145]. In this case we would have a conjecture without any evidence.

The adverb αὖθις confirms that this was not the first time such an action against this sanctuary had taken place. Dio referred to the senatorial decrees of 58 and 53 BCE, which had apparently been implemented. The soothsayers suggested the destruction of the τεμενίσματα, the precinct of the temple, but not the innermost part of the temple or the cult statues. The destruction of the protective walls was enough to remedy the situation. It meant symbolically the submission of the respective gods, thereby eliminating the cause of the bad portent. The more extreme action of destroying the innermost part of the temple and its cult statues was avoided, as this would offend the represented deities and cause other problems in turn.

Dio's account of the portents for 48 BCE make a clear case that, just as in 53/52BCE, the proposed actions against Isis and Sarapis came about in times of extreme senatorial weakness, i.e. during periods in which the Roman constitution had been rendered ineffective. The senators of 53 BCE and the soothsayers of 48 BCE might not have seen it in these terms, but their proposals and actions against the cult of Isis and Sarapis were nothing more than reactionary attemps at putting their world back in order through religious purification. But for Dio, these actions were dreadful portents; in his world Isis and Sarapis had not only a place in the Roman pantheon but were closely linked to the imperial couple.

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[143] Coarelli (1974), 48-9.

[144] This has led A. Alföldi to his hypothesis of the ever ready "Stoßtruppe."

[145] Richardson (1992), 40.

The escape of the proscribed aedile M. Volusius[146] dressed as a priest of Isis in 43 BCE[147] is widely quoted. Beyond the fact that a Roman politician could maintain relations to the cult of Isis and Sarapis, it has no real value for the study of the cult. In Valerius' account, Volusius fled to Brutus in Greece; in Appian's description, he made his way to Sextus Pompey, who controlled Sicily. The discrepancy of Volusius' final destination does not concern us here, although considering the length of the journey and the time of the year, Sicily seems more probable. We should also not infer from Appian's version that Volusius kept the Anubis mask on for the whole journey. An assumption that itinerant Isiac priests were a common sight is as doubtful in 43 BCE as at other times, and a man wearing a dog mask was an extravagant and all too suspicious sight. Should he have worn it, it must have been in the context of an Isiac ceremony. Only such a setting would have allowed his escape.

The *Kikellia*, a festival of the searching and finding of Osiris and the birth of Harpocrates, was celebrated for two days around the time of the winter solstice[148]. It is the only ritual, during which priests wore the Anubis mask, that fell into the period after the official legalization of the Triumvirate by the *lex Titia* on November 27 and the official publishing of the proscription lists. Since Volusius did not belong to the group of *inimici* who had been eliminated before the legalization of the Triumvirate, his escape from Rome must have occurred after the proscription lists had been made public. If Volusius really had waited for the *Kikellia* ceremony to come

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[146] F. Hinard *Les proscriptions de la Rome républicaine* (Rome, 1985), 550-1.

[147] Val. Max. 7.3.8: "M. Uolusius aedilis pl. proscriptus adsumpto Isiaci habitu per itinera uiasque publicas stipem petens, quisquam re uera esset, occurentibus dinoscere passus non est eoque fallaciae genere tectus in M. Bruti castra peruenit" and App. *BC* 4.47. An inscription from imperial times seems to suggest a long lasting relationship of the family with the cult of Isis. The Volusii were equites. [--U]olusius| [C]aesario| sacerdos Isidis| Capitoline *SIRIS* 378 (with bibliography) = *CIL* VI 2248.

[148] During imperial times the *Kikellia* were held December 24 - 25. Epiphanius *haer.* 51.22 equated this festival with the *Saturnalia*. The two ceremonies had similar contents and forms of expression (wearing masks) but the *Saturnalia* ended on December 23. Other relevant Isiac ceremonies fell outside the possible time frame. The *Isia*, the ritualistic representation of the Osirian myth, took place in Rome from October 28 - November 1. The first mention of this ceremony in Rome falls, however, in the period of Gaius' reign. Another possiblity for the wearing of the Anubis mask was the Isiac festival from 17. - 19. Hathyr (November 13 - 15). See R. Merkelbach *Isisfeste in griechisch-römischer Zeit. Daten und Riten* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1963), 36-9, 50-3, and 77.

around, he either showed courage and patience or was able to hide for three weeks. The same is true if Volusius had waited for the *Saturnalia* when, wearing a dog mask, he could have fled Rome more easily since not only a handful of Isiacs but the whole population of the capital celebrated. Maybe Appian's description of Volusius' disguise is nothing more than a literary embellishment of Valerius' sparse account. Appian came from Alexandria and wrote during a time in which the cult of Isis and Sarapis had been officially recognized.

The final episode in the fortunes of the cult of Isis and Sarapis in Rome in the Late Republic is the supposed decision by the Second Triumvirate in 43 BCE to build a temple in honor of Isis and Sarapis[149]. However, political reality intervened, and the plan was never carried out. The *triumuiri* had to spend their energy and resources in fighting the murderers of Caesar, and then each other. Later, in light of Octavian's opposition to Mark Antony, a building in honor of Isis and Sarapis would have undermined Octavian's straightforward propaganda against Cleopatra, the *νέα Ἶσις*[150], and her consort Antony.

The decision of the Triumvirate to build a temple to Isis and Sarapis has never received proper treatment. This is especially intriguing since Dio, who recorded the Triumvirate's decision[151], stated that the members of the Second Triumvirate voted in favor of a temple structure of Isis and Sarapis, but not to build such an edifice. Retrospective reasoning and acceptance of Augustan propaganda guide the belief that Mark Antony must have been the driving force behind this resolution, while Octavian and Lepidus gave way to their (at first) stronger colleague. Antony had succumbed to Cleopatra and abandoned all Roman values which Octavian embraced and protected. This scenario might be true for the 30's BCE but not for 43 BCE. The inscription from the eighth region, the existence of a sanctuary on the Capitoline hill and maybe one in the *campus Martius*, and the literary evidence leave no doubt that the cult of Isis and Sarapis was established in Rome. Its presence had even been judged to be the cause of divine disorder, and, consequently, wordly disorder. This, however, was only tangible at times of sociopolitical and economic stress. Cleopatra's presence in Rome gave the cult of Isis and Sarapis a much higher visibility since

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[149] D.C. *Hist.* 47.16.

[150] Pl. *Ant.* 54.6.

[151] *Hist.* 47.15.

it was an essential part of Ptolemaic dynastic worship. C. Julius Caesar had been her consort and this fact compelled the *triumuiri* to vote for a temple for Isis and Sarapis, and thus officially to recognize the cult. It was a symbolic gesture toward the deified Caesar. If we consider that there was already at least one sanctuary of Isis and Sarapis in Rome, the vote of the Triumvirate was nothing more than an official acknowledgement and acceptance of the cult, which had taken a *realpolitische* dimension.

8) Conclusion

A systematic examination of the numismatic material of the Late Republic has shown that the cult of Isis and Sarapis was not a revolutionary movement but that an artistic and intellectual current led to the employment of Isis-related symbols. Further, the various senatorial actions against the cult of Isis during this period belong not in an ethical, but in a political context. The fear of political destabilization led to the various actions against the cult. These sporadic actions, however, did not force a disintegration of the cult associations. The political integration of the eastern Mediterranean and finally the *socii* caused an assimilation of their cultural and intellectual assets. Thus, the successive integration of Isis and Sarapis into the Roman pantheon could not be stopped.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PRINCIPATE

1) Introduction

The utter destruction of Carthage and Corinth in 146 BCE left no doubt that Rome exercised hegemony over the Mediterranean world. Although the Roman *polis* system could not efficiently handle the social, economic, ideological[1], and cultural changes which accompanied the territorial acquisitions, leading Romans could not see any reason to change the political system that brought them such grandeur. This conclusion reveals an understanding of the world as a row of singular causes and effects; and it was within this range the Romans sought solutions for their failing political system.

Rome's ascent to military supremacy over the Mediterranean world upset its domestic economic and social structure, while Hellenistic influence transformed Roman traditional values. The various *mores maiorum* which were believed to be the cause for Rome's greatness, became largely fictional ideals existing only in rhetoric and literature. Conscious of the difference between the Hellenistic and the Roman literary heritage, Roman writers were able to produce, especially after the Social War, literature that reflected this new condition. They had successfully overcome what still plagued the political sphere; they had found new ways of expressing their cultural identity by recognizing the difference between the Hellenistic and Roman heritage[2].

Augustus resolved the conflict between the actual political condition and the inherited political and moral model. His genius was that he created the basis of a new political system, the Principate, by reviving the traditional Republican value system, by renewing the ancestral cults, and by revitalizing the Republic's political organization. The use of familiar terminology lessened public anxiety and further hindered social disorder. Elements proven to be the cause for Rome's greatness gave points of reference and direction. This, on the

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[1] Ideology, in this case, includes besides the *mos maiorum* also the conceptualization of the world or *Weltanschauung*.

[2] R. MacMullen, "Hellenizing the Romans," *Historia* 40 (1991), 419-38.

other hand, guaranteed social stability. Thus, the Roman heritage had not only been successfully integrated into a new order, it was also the most essential component in its creation.

This new political and idealogical landscape required its own imagery and signs[3]. Its purpose was the systematic propagation of the notion of Augustus as the central social, political, and religious force of the state. This, of course, set him apart from all the other inhabitants of the empire. The process of detaching the figure 'Octavian' from the human sphere began with the deification of C. Julius Caesar. The senatorial decree to name him Augustus, the acquisition of the position of *pontifex maximus*, and the honorific title *pater patriae* sealed this metamorphosis.

Imperial worship, the veneration of the emperor's *genius* in connection with the goddess Roma, was aimed at socially integrating and engaging affluent freedmen. While more covert, it was nothing more than an aspect of imperial propaganda. Its goal was the advancement of the emperor as the single most important force in the state[4]. The internal dynamic of the emperor as an extraordinary human being, reflected in the official worship and his status as a *diui filius*[5], enabled each subsequent emperor to place himself with greater facility than his predecessor in the intermediate sphere between humans and gods. Ultimately, he was solely in the divine domain, and could ask for the appropriate treatment. With every successive Roman emperor the Egyptian model became more pertinent and prepared the ground for a successful integration of Isis and Sarapis into the Roman pantheon.

Tiberius' sucession proved that the Principate could outlast its creator. The second *princeps* tried in the beginning of his rule to get

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[3] Zanker (1988).

[4] E. Kornemann, "Zur Geschichte der antiken Herrscherkulte," *Klio* 1 (1901), 51-146, S.R.F. Price *Rituals and Power: the Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge, 1983), and D. Fishwick *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire, EPRO* 108, vol. 1.1 and 1.2 (Leiden, 1987) and vol. 2.1 (Leiden, 1991).

[5] His immediate predecessor did not need to be a *diuus*. M. Hammond *The Antonine Monarchy* (Rome, 1959), 203-4: "From the beginning of the empire (...) the emperor had two distinct religious elements in his position. One was the control of the state religion through holding the office of *pontifex maximus* and being a member of other religious colleges (...). The other was the official recognition that he was, if not actually divine, at least of divine descent and possessed superhuman qualities." Also L. Ross Taylor *The Divinity of The Roman Emperor* (Middletown, 1931).

the Senate more involved in decision making but he did not succeed in it. Times and people had changed too much. Tiberius strengthened the political system Augustus had initiated mainly because the Senate was simply unable to emerge as a strong antipode to the *princeps*. The fact that Tiberius could eventually rule the empire from Capri and not from Rome, demonstrates that the figure of the emperor and not the location of his government was decisive.

As Tiberius was conscious of his Republican and Claudian heritage, his successor, Gaius (Caligula), was aware of his imperial background. The son of Germanicus was the great-grandson of Augustus and Mark Antony[6]. Thus, in contrast to Tiberius, Gaius' personal and political heritage coincided. Furthermore, since the Principate was at the time of Gaius' succession well established, there was no need for self-reflection or change in political direction. He simply picked up where Tiberius had left off. While Gaius pushed the Principate toward despotism, which meant a further detachment from the illusion that Republican modes were still at work, he shaped the Principate further. The system was fully unmasked and the Republican façade was torn down for the duration of his reign. The will of the *princeps* was law; he and the state were one and the same.

Gaius' inclination toward autocracy, so one still reads, should be traced back to his childhood. He spent the formative years of his life in the household of his grandmother Antonia. There the foundations for his deep affinity for the oriental world were either laid or an already existing fondness reinforced. Never mind that his uncle Claudius had spent more time in this very household and did not develop the same interest in strange oriental cults and the like! Surrounded by eastern princes and the ever-present spirit of his great-grandfather Mark Antony, Gaius succumbed to orientalism and eventually suffered from *Caesarwahnsinn*. His family background and his past kindled his inclination for Egyptian cults. Orientalism stood in antithesis to Roman tradition[7]. It was inherently decadent and employed solely for the strengthening of despotic rule.

The last two Julio-Claudian emperors, Claudius and Nero, had no special interest in Isis or Sarapis. This changed with Vespasian, who emerged as Nero's successor after a year-long civil war. The Roman

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[6] Gaius' mother was in Tacitus' words *Ann.* 4.52: "caelesti sanguine ortam."

[7] E. Köberlein *Caligula und die ägyptischen Kulte* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1962) provides a study based on this concept. In contrast to Köberlein and more reasonable on the life of Gaius is A.A. Barrett's study *Caligula* (Manchester, 1989).

concept of religion, whose primary function was to secure a reciprocally prosperous relationship between mankind and gods, shaped the religious policies of the Flavians. In these traditional terms a successful restoration of the inner order of the empire could only be achieved in part through appeasement of the gods. This made an integration of Isis and Sarapis necessary since their place of origin was the breadbasket of the empire. Egypt guaranteed the economic and therefore social stability of Rome and, by extension, that of the empire. In addition, Vespasian had to show respect toward the main deities of the city in which he had been proclaimed emperor. Since the proclamation took place in Alexandria, Vespasian had a further advantage. He, as other prominent Romans before and after him, could place himself in the tradition of Alexander the Great without much effort.

The Flavian restoration program, the *resurrectio Romae* was political and religious in nature, as was its predecessor, the Augustan program[8]. Traditional concepts and established realities guided it. There was the unquestioned centrality of the emperor in the state structure and his intermediate position between the human and divine sphere, which had evolved since Augustus' time and inadvertently had been intensified by the more despotic emperors Gaius and Nero. Vespasian's personal interest in Sarapis, and by extension in Isis, coincided with the political necessity of stabilization. The transformation of Isis and Sarapis from personal to Roman state gods had received an important impulse with this linking of the divine couple to the *domus Augusta*.

Hadrian, who had a special affinity for Egypt, demonstrated religious tolerance. So did the Antonine emperors. Although a by-product of the inclusive polytheistic religious system, stable political conditions restrained chastisement of cults or religions which could otherwise be perceived as foreign superstitions. If this stability was threatened, regulative steps were quickly implemented, as in the case of the second Jewish uprising under Bar Kochba. Since the inclusion of the cult of Isis into the *sacra publica*, which was the result of the assignment of a public temple structure in the *campus Martius* in the mid-first century CE and the Flavian interest in the Alexandrian deities, the cult could no longer be singled out as a destabilizing factor. Even its place of origin, Egypt, had, since Augustus' annex-

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[8] F. Lucrezi *Leges super principem. La monarchia constituzionale di Vespasiano* (Naples, 1982), especially Chapter 3 ("Autocrazia e 'resurrectio Romae'"), 95-118.

ation, lost its symbolic meaning as the antithesis of Rome. Also, the artistic side of Egypt, for example the nilotic landscapes, had already been integrated into the cultural framework during the period of the waning Republic. Political opposition did not exclude artistic interest, particularly since the hostility was aimed at Mark Antony and Cleopatra, and not at the country as a whole.

While personal motivations led some emperors to embrace Isis and Sarapis, their association with these deities had political implications. The natural development of the Augustan Principate, whose internal dynamic propelled any emperor into the intermediate sphere between the terrestrial and divine, induced such implications. With the increasing centralization of the postion of the *princeps* in the state structure, the road was open for a complete identification of the divine with the imperial couple. Thus, the basic structure of the Pharaonic and Ptolemaic ideology was duplicated unintentionally and unconsciously. The natural end of this development fell into the period of the Severi more than two centuries after Augustus laid the groundwork for a new political order.

2) The Julio-Claudians

2.1) Octavian Augustus

The prohibition of 28 BCE forbidding Egyptian *sacra* inside the *pomerium* has been regarded as further proof of Octavian's deep dislike for anything Egyptian and his sincere devotion to the *mos maiorum*[9]. This action, however, has to be seen in light of Octavian Augustus' 'program of cultural renewal[10],' which could only be effective in an ordered political and religious environment. Friction had to be avoided and this meant among other things a guarded acknowledgement of the Alexandrian deities. This was part of a guarantee for the *pax deorum*. In addition, Octavian had, at least, to appear consistent in his pronouncements and decrees. Inconsistency would have meant a loss of confidence, and confidence in his person was a guarantee for stability.

Octavian's prime concern was, as always, with the public and not the private sphere. He did not intend to inhibit cultic activities that

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[9] D. C. *Hist.* 53.2.4: "*καὶ τὰ μὲν ἱερὰ τὰ Αἰγύπτια οὐκ ἐσεδέξατο εἴσω τοῦ πωμερίου, τῶν δὲ δὴ ναῶν πρόνοιαν ἐποιήσατο*." The assumption that *τὰ ἱερὰ τὰ Αἰγύπτια* were temples makes no sense whatsoever.

[10] Zanker (1988), Chapter 4 ("The Augustan Program of Cultural Renewal").

took place inside a private temple structure or on private property. Dio's text makes this implicitly clear. Octavian, who forbade Egyptian rites/cult-images inside the *pomerium*, "made provisions for the restoration of their temples[11]." The thought that these refurbished temples were either not used, or used by other cults, or had only the representational function of beautifying Rome is absurd and based on a recycling mode yet unknown to the Romans. The basic idea behind Octavian's proclamation was the relocation of the cultic procession route from public streets to private locations. This fulfilled three political aims. First, Octavian's pronouncement against Egyptian *sacra* demonstrated a resolute political stand against something identifiable as Egyptian. This, of course, was according to his earlier policy. Its goal was the political outmaneuvering of Antony. Second, it showed Octavian as protector of Roman values without provoking any deities or their worshipers, since the worship was not strictly curtailed. Third, it removed an attraction from public streets and prevented possible public interest, which had to be directed toward securing Octavian's own political program.

The measure of 28 BCE came when Octavian's central position in the state was only beginning to take shape and thus was far from secure. Agrippa's measure in 21 BCE against Egyptian *sacra* has to be seen in the same light. As Augustus' deputy in Rome, Agrippa had to ensure that the *princeps'* policy and Augustus' position were unchallenged. When Egyptian *sacra* surfaced again in the city, the earlier decree was flouted and Augustus' authority undermined. Agrippa had to act. He restated and modified the decree of 28 BCE. Egyptian *sacra* were banned within an eighth of a half-stadion from

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[11] The *μέν* - *δέ* construction emphasizes the connection between the Egyptian rites/cult-images and the temples. The fact that Augustus ordered them refurbished D. C. *Hist.* 53.2.4-5: *"τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ὑπ' ἰδιωτῶν τινων γεγενημένους τοῖς τε παισὶν αὐτῶν καὶ τοῖς ἐκγόνοις, εἴγε τινὲς περιῆσαν, ἐπισκευάσαι ἐκέλευσε, τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς αὐτὸς ἀνεκτήσατο. οὐ μέντοι καὶ τὴν δόξαν τῆς οἰκοδομήσεώς σφων ἐσφετερίσατο, ἀλλ' ἀπέδων αὐτοῖς τοῖς κατασκευάσασιν αὐτούς."*

In addition to the shrine on the Capitol and the *Iseum Campense*, there was an *Iseum* just inside the boundary of the third region, built or restored by a Metellus either in the beginning of the empire or as late as the second century. See Platner (1965), 285 and Richardson (1992), 212. Another sanctuary (possibly a statue (Richardson (1992), 213) was the one of *Isis Anthenodoria*, which was probably near the Baths of Caracalla, and *Isis Pelagia*, Platner (1965), 286, Richardson (1992), 213, *CIL* VI 8707 and *SIRIS* 396.

the suburbs, the *proastion*[12]. The *proastion* was the area that began outside the city-wall, the *murus*[13]. Directly behind and within the *murus* was the *pomerium*, which defined the *urbs Roma*[14]. The city wall of 21 BCE coincided most likely with the Republican wall. This wall enclosed the Quirinal, Viminal, Oppian, Caelian, Aventine, and Capitol. From this wall we have to project an extension of approximately 11.5m, which corresponds to the eighth of a half-stadion[15]. The essence of Agrippa's decree is the closure of the access routes, especially the gates into the city, and thus a restriction of freedom of movement for the worshipers. Possible danger came not from Egyptian cults but from the fact that their adherents congregated in association. The fact that the Senate and then emperors passed various laws prohibiting or curtailing *collegia* leaves no doubt about the apprehension of the political leadership and the caution it exercised toward any group. The measure of 28 BCE forbidding Egyptian *sacra* inside the city of Rome, in practice restricting them to temples, conformed to this anxiety because it enforced control and eliminated the attraction of crowds. Augustus encouraged a revival of the old Roman cults and their festivals because they secured his own exclusive political position, which was not entirely safe in 28 or 21 BCE. When the adherents of 'the Egyptian cults' ignored the measure of 28 BCE, Agrippa, in line with the original decree, added a distance stipulation.

Political measures against 'Egyptian cults' did not, nor were they ever intended to, prohibit the incorporation of Egyptian motifs in Roman art and literature. Even at the time of intensive political anti-Egyptian diatribes before the battle of Actium, the artistic employment of Egyptian motifs did not cease. This is not surprising on two counts. First, in the Roman mind political and private interests did

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[12] D.C. *Hist.* 54.6.6: "(...) *τά τε ἱερὰ τὰ Αἰγύπτια ἐπεσιόντα αὖθις ἐς τὸ ἄστυ ἀνέστειλεν ἀπειπὼν μηδένα μηδὲ ἐν τῷ προαστείῳ αὐτὰ ἐντὸς ὀγδόου ἡμισταδίου ποιεῖν*·"

[13] A. von Gerkan, "Der Lauf der römischen Stadtmauer vom Kapitol zum Aventin," *RM* 46 (1931), 153-88. von Gerkan thought that the *pomerium* and the *murus* coincided along the Capitol. G. Säflund *Le mura di Roma republicana* (Lund, 1932).

[14] On founding of a Roman city see Varro *L.* 5.143. For the problems in connection with *pomerium* see Th. Mommsen *Römisches Staatsrecht*, vol. 1.3 (Leipzig, 1887), 63, n. 2. A good discussion M. Labrouse, "Le pomerium de la Rome impériale," *MEFRA* 54 (1937), 265-99 with a useful map on p. 169.

[15] A stadion corresponds to 1/8 of a Roman mile ~ 185 meters. 1/8 of 1/2 stadion = 1/16 of 185 m = 11.5m.

not have to coincide. There was no thought of hypocrisy as long as a Roman politician advanced and secured the interests of the Roman state. Speaking out in public against Egypt, for example, did not mean a banning of everything at home that might have only a touch of Egypt. The two spheres had nothing to do with each other and could coexist because they were independent of each other. Second, nilotic landscapes and Isiac symbols were elements of Roman art long before Cleopatra and Mark Antony, the new Isis and her consort, were declared public enemies.

After Actium and the consequent integration of Egypt as a province, Egyptian artistic motifs were used even more extensively than before[16]. The best examples for this are Augustus' and Livia's villa on the Palatine, the *aula Isiaca*, and the villa della Farnesina, probably the home of Agrippa and Julia. The construction of all these buildings fell in the time of Augustus' and Agrippa's anti-Egyptian *sacra* measure[17]. The wall decorations of the upper *cubiculum* of Augustus' house include Egyptian landscapes with obelisks, lotus flowers, *uraei*, and *situlae*[18]. Livia's villa incorporated similar motifs and depicted an Egyptian sun theme, which seemed, at least to Picard-Schmitter, like a pantheistic dream and thus stood in contrast to the more naturalistic depictions in the villa of Augustus[19].

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[16] M. de Vos *L'egittomania in pitture e mosaici Romano-Campani della prima età imperiale, EPRO* 84 (Leiden, 1980) is a valuable work despite the term *egittomania*, which seems exaggerated.

[17] I. Bragantini and M. de Vos *Le decorazioni della villa romana della Farnesina in Museo Nazionale Romano*, vol. 2.1 (Rome, 1982).

[18] G. Carettoni *Das Haus des Augustus auf dem Palatin* (Mainz, 1983) placed the construction of the villa in the years 36-28 BCE. A description of the upper *cubiculum* pp. 67-85.

[19] M.-Th. Picard-Schmitter, "Bétyles Hellénistiques," *Fondation Eugène Piot Monuments et Mémoires* 57 (1971), 88: "Toute la décoration de la maison de Livie apparaît comme un rêve panthéiste (...). Dans la demeure d'Auguste, le symbolisme est pragmatique et habilement masqué sous le vérisme (...). On peut admirer l'habilité avec laquelle il a su présenter un mémorial de son accession au pouvoir sans choquer l'opinion romain et faire accepter une religion du Prince qui avait sa source principale en Égypte." This thought is not applicable to Augustus. R. Turcan *Les cultes orientaux dans le monde romain* (Paris, 1989), 91, provides a better explanation. "(...) tout autant que les domestiques de la maison impériale dont on déchiffre les 'graffiti' isiaques sur les murs du palais, l'iconographie ornementale a fait pénétrer chez les Césars une ambiance, un imaginaire propices aux dieux égyptiens."

Further proof that the measures of 28 and 21 BCE cannot be interpreted as expressions of deep dislike of everything Egyptian is the fact that M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, a supporter of Augustus and his politics as well as a patron of the arts, did not shy away from including an Osirian idol, brought from Egypt, with his family's *penates*[20]. Tibullus recorded this in the honorary poem written on the occasion of Messalla's triumph over the Aquitani[21]. Messalla's placing of an Osirian idol with *penates* makes sense if we remember that these guardian *numina* of a family's storage-room or cupboard were worshipped together with Vesta, the goddess of the hearth, and the *lares*, deities of the farmland associated with ghosts of the dead[22]. Osiris conveniently combined the functions of the *penates* and the *lares*. He was the god of the Underworld and also associated with fertility. Messalla's private action illustrates the flexibility of Rome's religious system. It also subtly reveals that leading Romans saw themselves not only as conquerors but also as heirs of Egypt's tradition.

Augustus' placing of obelisks, monuments foreign to Roman sculptural art, in Rome shows this aspect as well[23]. The incorpora-

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[20] Turcan (1989), 90: "M. Valerius Messalla, son puissant protecteur, a peut-être rapporté du Delta en 29 ou 28 avant J.-C. le culte d'une idole osirienne qu'il associe dans son laraire à ses dieux Pénates."

[21] 1.7 with a short aretology of Osiris 11. 23-54. M.J. Putnam *Tibullus. A Commentary* (Norman, 1973), 118 comments cautiously: "The poem contrives within an elegy elements of our major poetic genres: (...) song, heroic ode, and religious hymn. (...) The youth of Egypt praise Osiris and the Roman young hail Messalla, allowing us to compare the two."

[22] There are two basic theories on the *lares*. E. Samter thought the *lar familiaris* closely connected with the cult of the dead. G. Wissowa considered them deities of the farmland. The connection with ghosts is a later development.

[23] The obelisk in the *campus Martius* which was the hand (*gnomon*) of a monumental sun dial, now in the Piazza Montecitorio, and the obelisk placed in the *spina* of the *circus maximus*, now in the Piazza del Popolo. (A youth holding the *gnomon* in his lap serves as personification of the *campus Martius* in the apotheosis relief of the column of Antoninus Pius.) In addition to these Augustus had probably ordered the placement of two obelisks by the entrance of the *mausoleum Augusti*. One of them is now in the Piazza del Quirinale, the other in the Piazza dell' Esquilino. The first obelisk which Augustus converted into a monument expressing his and Rome's superiority was the one now standing in the Piazza di S. Pietro. The most insightful and comprehensive study on this monument is by G. Alföldy, "Der Obelisk auf dem Petersplatz in Rom. Ein historisches Monument der Antike," *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse*, 1990.2 (Heidelberg, 1990). Alföldy showed convincingly that this obelisk had been originally planned as a monument to Mark Antony. Then turned through a *iussu imperatoris Caesaris*,

tion of these originally Egyptian monuments[24] equipped with Latin inscriptions visually expressed both Augustus' claim to power and Rome's political superiority. In short, obelisks had simply become part of Augustus' 'program of cultural renewal[25]. ' Thus integrated into Rome's landscape and imbued with a specific Roman meaning, obelisks were eventually put up in other cities as well[26]. Egypt had become part of the Roman public world.

2.2) Tiberius

The Tacitean image of a vicious and resentful Tiberius, chosen by Augustus only so that he could heighten his own glory[27], has colored many studies on the Early Principate and still prevails as the most commonly held popular notion about Tiberius[28]. Although holding an *imperium* at the time of Augustus' death and designated as his heir, the first transfer of political power from the dead to the living *princeps* was riddled with insecurities. Neither the Senate nor Tiberius knew at first what the political situation allowed. The adaptability and applicability of Augustus' political creation was as yet unknown. The legionary revolts in Pannonia and Germania inferior and the 'near proclamation' of Germanicus as emperor accentuate the difficulties of the first succession and the fragility of Augustus' creation. The Principate had never been envisioned or constructed as a generally applicable and permanent political structure, but worked for and around one person: Augustus himself. The Treason Trials held mainly before the Senate, which so marred Tiberius' reign, emphasized the fact that the Senate's function was, by now, solely the administration of justice. And justice was based

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i.e. Octavian Augustus, by C. Cornelius Gallus in 30 BCE into the earliest monument of Roman rule over Egypt. Shortly after the death of Augustus, the obelisk, its old inscription more or less withered away, received a new dedicatory inscription. Gaius then had this obelisk brought to Rome and placed in the *circus Uaticanus*.

[24] E. Iverson *Obelisks in Exile* (Rome, 1969).

[25] Zanker (1988) discusses the *gnomon* of the sun dial p. 144.

[26] On obelisks in other cities and part of circuses see J.H. Humphrey *Roman Circuses. Arenas for Ancient Racing* (London, 1986).

[27] *Ann.* 1.10.7.

[28] On the reign of Tiberius see B. Levick *Tiberius the Politician* (London, 1976), "A Cry from the Heart from Tiberius Caesar," *Historia* 27 (1978), 95-101, F.B. Marsh *The Reign of Tiberius* (Oxford, 1931), R. Seager *Tiberius* (London, 1972), and P. Schrömbges *Tiberius und die 'Res publica Romana.' Untersuchungen zur Institutionalisierung des frühen römischen Prinzipats* (Bonn, 1986).

on the laws the *princeps* issued or had issued through the various institutions.

While Tacitus records the expulsion of Jews[29] and of the adherents of Egyptian cults as an act based on a senatorial decree[30], Josephus and Suetonius make Tiberius alone responsible for it[31]. Tacitus' nostalgia for the Republican Rome explains such an assignment. Only the Senate could uphold Roman traditions, among them the *mos maiorum*, and thus warrant the *pax deorum*, which was essential for social harmony.

The senatorial task of maintaining the moral integrity of the State was traditional. With the establishment of the Principate this duty, as others, was now under the authority of the *princeps*. Beyond morality, however, stood the maintenance of the social structure, the power pyramid, and the cohesiveness of the State. Stringent decrees on morality, the expulsion of *superstitiones* or the return to traditional, even ancient forms of worship, were enacted in times of stress. The known world structure with its social, political, and economic components did not seem stable. It either went through a transitional phase or was simply in the process of disintegration.

The problems of the year 19 CE were manifold. Germanicus, sent to take care of the eastern areas, surprised Tiberius with an unofficial voyage to Egypt. There he not only admired the country's antiquities, he also had the public granaries opened. At first, this lowered wheat prices as the supply increased, but when the grain reserves were depleted prices soared, to the detriment of Rome's inhabitants with lower incomes. Germanicus seems to have sought immediate acclaim - the deed made him popular - but he ignored the long-term consequence: that empty granaries in Alexandria eventually meant starvation in Rome[32]. Those who could buy cheap wheat in huge amount would then resell it at a higher price. The illness and subsequent death of Germanicus, Tiberius' heir-apparent chosen by Augustus, created further insecurity among Rome's populace which the ensuing trial against Cn. Calpurnius Piso only heightened. Germanicus, who had visibly placed himself in the Hellenistic

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[29] E.M. Smallwood, "Some Notes on the Jews under Tiberius," *Latomus* 15 (1956), 314-29.

[30] *Ann.* 2.85.5.

[31] *AJ* 18.72 and *Tib.* 36.1.

[32] Tac. *Ann.* 2. 67.

tradition and emulated Alexander the Great[33] by traveling through Egypt, seriously undermined Tiberius' political authority and obviously challenged his central position in the state structure.

Then there was the Arsacid Vonones, given as a hostage to Augustus by King Phraates IV and later installed as king over the Parthians. He was expelled and fled to Armenia. The Armenians, at the time without a monarch, took him in and declared him their king. This Armenian affront made a war between these two eastern countries imminent. Rome had to act in order to quell a possible war and keep the eastern border secure. Q. Caecilius Metellus Creticus Silanus, governor of Syria in 16, had Vonones removed to Cilicia[34]. Three years later, Vonones escaped from his Cilician exile and jeopardized the delicate balance of power again[35]. The quarrel between Germanicus and Cn. Calpurnius Piso, which ended in Germanicus' repeal of their *amicitia*, and the choice of Cn. Sentius Saturninus as governor of Syria as Piso's replacement, made the eastern problem all the more acute. When Domitius Celer, who had sided with Piso and nurtured rebellious designs, took up winter quarters in the Syrian city of Laodicea, it highlighted the way in which internal Roman politics intensified problems abroad. In short, Rome's eastern politics were in shambles and Tiberius had to resort to damage control.

These problems in Rome's eastern provinces had caused social instability. Germanicus aggravated this condition with unauthorized actions in Egypt. The resulting popular uprising in Rome due to high wheat prices ultimately threw Rome into disorder. The masses needed to be controlled because disorder in the center of the empire spelled trouble for the periphery. A weakened center could not

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[33] Tacitus' comparison between Alexander and Germanicus *Ann.* 2. 73 and above all Germanicus' speech preserved on a papyrus is most telling. *PapOxy* 25, 2435, trans. E.G. Turner: "Even before now I thought it (Alexandria) to be a dazzling spectacle, in the first place because of the hero who is your founder, to whom a common debt is from those who have the same aspiration." O. Weippert *Alexander imitatio und römische Politik* (Diss. Augsburg, 1972) provides a useful outline on the emulation of Alexander among leading Romans from Pompey to the Julio-Claudians. On the topic Germanicus and Egypt see G.J.D. Aaldos, "Germanicus und Alexander der Grosse," *Historia* 10 (1961), 382-4, S. Borzsák, "Das Germanicusbild des Tacitus," *Latomus* 28 (1969), 588-600, E. Koestermann, "Die Mission des Germanicus im Orient," *Historia* 7 (1958), 331-75, J. van Ooteghen, "Germanicus en Égypte," *LEC* 27 (1959), 241-51, and D.G. Weingärtner *Die Ägyptenreise des Germanicus, Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen* 2 (Bonn, 1969).

[34] Tac. *Ann.* 2.1-4.

[35] Tac. *Ann.* 2.68

efficiently govern the areas in the outskirts of the empire. In all this, Germanicus was not perceived to be a problem since he had been sent to solve the original problem and, as Augustus' choice to succeed Tiberius, he was politically and morally incontestable.

The setting of fixed wheat prices and the promise of a subsidy was an immediate reaction to an economic problem that had brought an already existing social situation to a head. For a Roman, however, the primary cause of problems affecting Roman society was linked to inappropriate moral and religious behavior. Hence, appropriate moral and religious countermeasures were needed to restore the desired status quo and stability.

The basic belief patterns and the religious laws of the Jewish faith were not compatible with the polytheistic Roman religion. This, however, did not apply to the cult of Isis and Sarapis. If Judaism and the cult of Isis were singled out as *superstitiones* which had to be curtailed by the state, then they had to share at least one common characteristic to be perceived as reasons for the present desperate condition of state affairs. Only one seems relevant, the fact that both could easily be associated with Alexandria, Rome's major grain supplier, and the cause of the popular unrest in 19. The city had a large Jewish population and the city's main gods were Isis and Sarapis.

Josephus, who published his *Antiquitates Judaicae* a good decade before Tacitus' *Annales* appeared, provides us with what seems the most detailed account of the action against the cult of Isis[36]. The Paulina and Decimus Mundus scandal, which gave Tiberius a reason to act most viciously against the cult, reads more like an engaging short story about the victims of *hybris*, a rebuked lover, the *eques* Mundus, a chaste and honorable Roman matron - the object of Mundus' desire - named Paulina, and the lover's clever and loyal freedwoman, Ida. Modeled on the prototype of the ever cunning and amoral slave, Ida thought of a way to get Mundus what he wanted. She used her connections with the Isiac priests and paved the way for a nightly encounter. The deceit of Paulina follows essentially the Nectanebos story, which is part of the Alexander romance[37]. Mundus, disguised as the god Anubis, deceived the chaste and most honorable Paulina. She, who could withstand the advances of the young knight, did not hesitate to spend a night with the god and then

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[36] 18.66-80.

[37] Ps.-Callisthenes Book One in F. Pfister *Der Alexanderroman mit einer Auswahl aus den verwandten Texten* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1978).

bragged about it. The punishment for her *hybris* was Mundus' revelation, in itself an act of *hybris*. Paulina, like Lucretia, Rome's foremost heroine of chastity and loyalty, went to her husband and told him everything. He in turn went to Tiberius who ordered the cult's priest crucified, the statues thrown into the Tiber, and Mundus exiled.

The fact that Josephus was a Flavian protégé and wrote during a time in which the Alexandrian deities had become the protectors of *principes* explains the occurrence of accounts dealing with the Alexandrian deities in his *Antiquitates Judaicae*. Josephus wrote an ethnology and history of the Jewish people from the Creation to the first Jewish uprising crushed by Titus. Tiberius' radical action against the cult stands in utmost contrast to Vespasian's or Domitian's behavior toward these gods and their priests, and this seems to be the reason for Josephus' story of the punishment. Another possibility might be Josephus' personal background. The previous short passage dealt with Jesus, who, in the eyes of Josephus, a priest and Pharisee, had wavered from the right course. Likewise the priests of Isis had abused their cultic office and broken a moral law. Their crimes were comparable; they instigated a disintegration of moral behavior. Since Jesus had been crucified, the priests of Isis, at least in Josephus' novelistic account, deserved no less[38].

Josephus added another account with the theme of deceit and moral disintegration. Fulvia, most likely a proselyte, gave gold and purple for the temple in Jerusalem. The four Jews who had asked for the donation, however, used the offerings themselves. Like the followers of Jesus and like Paulina, Fulvia was the victim of deception. It is the theme of the three stories, with the middle one as the most elaborate, initiated by the mention of Jesus, and not the chronology of the events that is decisive.

The identification of Paulina with Fulvia, as Rogers suggested[39], would provide us with an intriguing historical background since a Fulvia Paulina was married to a son of C. Sentius Saturninus[40]. One

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[38] Following the traditional train of thought on the cult of Isis and Sarapis and demonstrating an apparent lack of knowledge regarding this cult and Roman history H.R. Moehring, "The Persecutions of the Jews and the Adherents of the Isis Cult at Rome A.D. 19," *NT* 3 (1959), 292-304 discussed Josephus' novelistic treatment of the Paulina story at length.

[39] R.S. Rogers, "Fulvia Paulina C. Sentii Saturnini," *AJP* 53 (1932), 252-6.

[40] Rogers (1932), 255 thinks of Gaius, consul in 4 CE since his brother Gnaius,

could then postulate some sort of blackmail from Piso's supporters. The major problem, however, is the fusion of the two women who had different religious interests. Paulina was an adherent of the cult of Isis, for she was eager to meet Anubis. Fulvia, willing to give a donation for the temple in Jerusalem, can be thought of as a proselyte Jew. Even if it were plausible that this hypothetical 'Paulina Fulvia' at one point had been attracted to the mysteries of the henotheistic mother-goddess Isis and then converted to Judaism, the reverse is still rather unlikely. One is then left to wonder not only about her religious conversion and persuasion, her judgement of character and naiveté, but also the emperor's repeated willingness to intervene on behalf of the twice-fooled 'Paulina Fulvia' and his sweeping punishments to avenge her. Josephus' colorful account of the state actions against the adherents of Egyptian cults and the Jews does not rely on the existence of a 'Paulina Fulvia' but on the theme of moral disintegration that was, in his opinion, equally applicable to the Jewish and Roman state of affairs.

Suetonius, whose rendering shows great similarities with Tacitus' version, included *astrologi* among the persecuted. In this latest account, Tiberius, trying to boost Roman morality, reactivated old laws and abolished foreign cults in Rome, particularly the Egyptian cults and the Jewish faith that had attracted Roman citizens[41]. He banished all astrologers who did not ask him for forgiveness and would not refrain from prophesying. The *princeps* forced all citizens who had embraced these *superstitiones* to burn their religious vestments and other accessories. Tiberius tried forcefully, but not brutally, to induce Roman citizens to relinquish beliefs that undermined the political structure and eliminate those which could cause public disorder. Jews of military age were removed to unhealthy regions on the pretext of drafting them into the army; others of the same race or of similar, i.e. superstitious, beliefs were expelled from the city and threatened with slavery if they defied the order. Suetonius mentions neither crucifixions, nor an order to destroy sanctuaries or cult statues.

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consul suffectus of the same year, a *comes* of Germanicus Caesar had taken Piso's place and governed Syria (19-21 CE) and was not present in Rome when the scandal happened. Josephus, however, recorded the presence of the husband. R. Syme, "The Stemma of the Satii Saturnini," *Historia* 13 (1964), 256-66.

[41] G. La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome During the First Centruies of the Empire," *HThR* 20 (1927), 183-403, especially pp. 372-93.

In Suetonius' version, Tiberius' decree hit male Jews the hardest. It is not unlikely that the revolt of the Jews of the Diaspora 115-8, which started in Alexandria, colored Suetonius' writing of this *uita Tiberii* passage[42]. Whether the burning of the vestments and accessories was part of the original decree cannot be established. Should it have happened, then it was literally an act of religious purification, a city-wide purging of religious pollutants, and a visual demonstration of the *princeps'* political and religious authority. A novelty among the literary accounts is the addition of the banishment of *astrologi*. Unlike Tacitus, who recorded all occurrences of the year 19, and Josephus, who wrote on a moral topic, Suetonius supplies the reader with the two state measures against religious association issued during Tiberius' reign. The decree against the *astrologi*, a *senatus-consultum*, had been issued in 16[43]. The essential reason for the expulsion of this group is the same as for the Jews and adherents of Egyptian cults. Astrologers who studied constellations knew the effects of stars on men in power and thus what the future would hold for the whole empire. In short, they had the potential to disrupt the status quo. Popular curiosity to have a glimpse at the future and the maintenance of order, i.e. civic tranquility, especially in the capital, stood in conflict with each other[44]. Astrological knowledge made public was dangerous. It could disrupt the relationship between the leader and the led, particularly when a revolt or an emperor's death was foretold. On the other hand, an astrologer working solely for the emperor gave him the necessary advantage over his potential rivals.

The three accounts of the measures against the Jews and the Egyptian cults differ in detail but in essence they state the same idea, namely, that the cause of social disorder and political weakness as well as the remedy had to be sought in the religious and moral sphere. This falling back on religion and morality in critical times should not be surprising since in the Roman understanding of the world, politics were embedded in those two spheres.

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[42] N. Lewis *Life in Egypt under Roman Rule* (Oxford, 1987), 30.

[43] F.H. Cramer *Astrology in Roman Law and Politics* (Philadelphia, 1954).

[44] R. MacMullen *Enemies of the Roman Order* (London, 1967), especially Chapter 4 ("Astologers, Diviners, and Prophets"), 128-62.

2.3) Gaius (Caligula)

Although Tiberius had chosen Gaius and Tiberius Gemellus as heirs to his property, ancient sources relate that he had suggested that Gaius should succeed him as princeps[45]. The son of the ever-popular Germanicus simply had better prerequisites than his second cousin Tiberius Gemellus. His ascension, to use Suetonius' words, "seemed like a dream come true[46]."

Inherited dispositions, education, and an ever-present Egyptian chamberlain[47] made Gaius, in the eyes of some scholars, succumb to Egyptian cults and become a devotee. He instituted some initiation rites and commanded the introduction of foreign mysteries[48]. Which ones they were remain a mystery. Köberlein, however, is thought to have found a clue in Josephus' opaque description that Gaius wore a woman's dress and had his hair braided[49]. He pointed out that Apuleius recorded this type of masquerade in his *Metamorphoses*[50] and thought it a part of the Isiac initiation ritual[51]. In the same passage Apuleius speaks of a tame she-bear, dressed like a woman, carried in a sedan-chair[52]. Is this bear to be thought of as a representation of the goddess as well? Certainly not! Procession and initiation were two different matters.

A careful reading of the relevant passage, Apuleius' description of the *nauigium Isidis*, reveals that these dressed up persons and animals, Köberlein's Isiac *Mummenschanz*, did not belong to the

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[45] D. C. *Hist.* 59, Jos. *AJ* 18.6.8.205-19.2.5.111, and Philo *Leg. ad Gaium* 4 (24).

[46] *Cal.* 13.1.

[47] On Helicon see R. Turcan *Vivre à la cour des Césars* (Paris, 1987), 73.

[48] *Suda*, ed. A. Adler (Leipzig, 1928), 503: "τελετὰς ἐπενόει καὶ ξένα μυστήρια ἐπετέλει." Jos. *AJ* 19.30, 104 and Suet. *Cal.* 52.

[49] The problem is that Köberlein interpreted too readily occurrences, actions, and archaeological remnants as expressions of Gaius' devotion to Egyptian cults. His Gaius demonstrated a "deutliche Hinneigung zur Ägypterei" and stood "im Banne ägyptisierender Vorstellungen," Köberlein (1962), 13.

[50] 11.8: "(...) alius soccis obauratis inductus serica ueste mundoque pretioso et adtextis capite crinibus incessu perfluo feminam mentiebatur (...)."

[51] Köberlein (1962), 35-6: "Diese Maskerade gehörte zum heiteren Teil der Mysterienfeier. Einen solchen Mummenschanz bei der Isisprozession schildert uns Apuleius (...). Da aber bei den Alten ausgelassener Scherz und heiligster Ernst sich nahe berührten, diente die Maskerade auch der Einweihungszeremonie. Der Myste legte das Kleid der Gottheit an und wurde so Gott oder Göttin."

[52] "uidi et ursam mansuem cultu matronali, <quae> sella uehebatur (...)."

actual procession train[53]. Isiacs wore white dresses[54], women wore the headdress and men had clean shaven heads[55]. Thus, women crowned with flowers led the procession[56], initiates without special cultic duties formed the middle, and various priests, each carrying a specific symbol of the cult[57], closed the procession train.

Griffiths, trying to find a reasonable explanation for the *mundus inuersus* procession, fell back on Petrus Chrysologus. This North Italian Christian writer of the fifth century attacked a pagan show produced at the Calends in which men dressed like women[58]. There is no explanation for the humanly dressed she-bear. The rich Egyptian artistic tradition of animals acting as men and women does not include bears[59]. This should not surprise us, since bears are strangers to the African continent. Since Lucius happened to be in Corinth when the *nauigium Isidis* took place, this carnival procession, whose main features were role reversal and disguise, could have been a form of the *Hybristika*. This originally Argive festival was just like the *nauigium*, a spring ceremony whose main feature was the role

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[53] Apuleius' transition from one procession description to the other makes this clear (*Met.* 11.9): "**iam** sospitatricis deae **peculiaris** pompa moliebatur," (emphasis mine). Merkelbach (1963), 39-41 took the two prcessions together as well.

[54] *amicimina* or *linteamina candida*.

[55] *Met.* 11.10: "illae limpido tegmine crines madidos obuolutae, hi capillum derasi funditus uertice praenitentes."

[56] *Met.* 11.9: "inter has oblectationes laudicras popularium, quae passim uagabantur, iam sospitatricis deae peculiaris pompa moliebatur: mulieres candido splendentes amicimine, uario laetantes gestamine, uerno florentes coronamine, quae de gremio per uiam, quae sacer incedebat comitatus, solum sternebant flosculis (...)."

[57] From Apuleius' account (*Met.* 11.10-1) we can deduce that a cultic association had at least five *antistetes*, who in the hierarchy were placed below the *sacerdos*. These five carried various insignia of Isis in a precession; namely, 1) a cup-shaped lamp (*lucerna consimilis cymbium*), 2) a portable alter (*altaria*), 3) a palm tree with golden leaves and a *caduceus* (*palma auro foliata, Mercuriale caduceum*), 4) a model of a streched out left hand (*manus sinistra porrecta palmula*) and a golden vessel in the shap of a nipple (*aureum uasculum in modum papillae*), and 4) a golden winnowing-basket (*aurea uannus*). Whether the person wearing the mask of Anubis or the three men carrying 1) a statue of a cow on his shoulders (*bos in erectum leuata statum (...) quod residens umeris suis*), 2) a roomy chest containing secrets (*cista secretorum capax*), and 3) the venerable effigy of the highest divinity (*summi numinis ueneranda effigies* were also called *antistetes* we do not know. It certainly is possible. It is clear, however, that the *sacerdos* held the highest cultic position. In his right hand he carried a rattle (*sistrum*) and a garland (*corona*).

[58] J.G. Griffiths *Apuleius of Madauros. The Isis Book (Metamorphoses, Book XI)*, *EPRO* 39 (Leiden, 1975), 176.

[59] Griffiths (1975), 177-9.

reversal of the sexes. Should Apuleius' report rely on an actual Corinthian event, which, of course, is not at all necessary for his narrative, the common Doric background of Argos and Corinth could nicely explain the existence of such a festival in the Isthmian city[60]. The she-bear might point to an initiation ritual for girls which originally was connected with the temple of Artemis in Brauron. Girls dressed in yellow robes "would mimick the behavior of she-bears. Shedding these robes symbolized abandonment of the 'bear-life' in order to enter a new stage of life, the phase of puberty, to be followed by marriage[61]." Gaius' masquerade as a woman could be linked with any female deity or any religious festival that included the wearing of masks or other forms of disguise[62]. Gaius' aim was not to demonstrate that he was an initiate of the cult of Isis or any other mystery cult but that he stood outside, maybe even above, the commonly accepted conventions and norms[63].

Likewise the other literary evidence, Suetonius' short mention of a rehearsal of a nocturnal performance by Egyptians and Ethiopians for a play staged in the Underworld[64], does not reveal Gaius as an Isiac[65]. It is true, as Snowden stated, that Meroe and Philae were important Isiac cult centers that survived into the Christian era and that Ethiopians were among the first adherents of Isis[66]. It is also established that ancient writers used the *ethnica* 'Egyptian' and 'Ethiopian' interchangeably or, as Snowden wrote, "Ethiopians were

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[60] Although controversial depictions on Attic vases seem to point to a similar festival. On this and the *Hybristika* see W. Burkert's short note in *Griechische Religion der archäischen und klassischen Epoche* (Stuttgart, 1977), 388-9, n. 53.

[61] L. Bruit Zaidman, "Pandora's Daughters and Rituals in Grecian Cities," in *A History of Women. From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*, ed. P. Schmitt Pantel and trans. A. Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA and London, 1992), 343.

[62] On the various Roman festivals connected with sowing and the appearance of the first shoots during which masks were worn and the participants disguised themselves see K. Meuli, "Altrömischer Maskenbrauch," and "Ursprung der Fastnacht," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1 (Basel and Stuttgart, 1975), 251-93.

[63] Meuli (1975), 298: "Dem aktiven Maskenspieler aber, der durch seine Verwandlung zu einem Wesen höherer Ordnung geworden ist, ist eine Macht und Freiheit ohnegleichen zugewachsen. (...) Für ihn ist alles, was sonst verboten war und verboten sein muss, nun erlaubt (...)."

[64] Suet. *Cal.* 57.4: "Parabatur et in noctem spectaculum, quo argumenta inferorum per Aegyptios et Aethiopas explicarentur."

[65] On this see Barrett (1989), 220.

[66] F.M. Snowden, Jr., "Ethiopians and the Isiac Worship," *AC* 25 (1956), 112-6.

at times associated with Egyptians[67]." These two facts, however, do not necessarily make this play staged in the Underworld an Isiac ritual. As it could have been a play about the installment of Osiris as king of the Underworld, it could also have been the story of Persephone or a theater play without any cultic meaning. The actors must not be thought of as initiates or even priests just because of their ethnic heritage.

Since Wissowa's ingenious deduction that the institution of the *Isia* in Rome must have coincided with the building of the temple of Isis in the *campus Martius*[68], it seemed the most likely hypothesis that Gaius, plagued by '*Caesarwahnsinn*', had given the order for its construction. Lucan provides the first indisputable literary evidence of the existence of this temple, when he alludes to the cultic funeral obsequies for Osiris[69]. These rites were a part of the *Isia* which, according to the fourth century calender of Philocalus, began in Rome on October 28th and ended November 1st[70]. In Wissowa's reconstruction the festival celebrating the finding of Osiris, the εὕρεσις, was decisive. According to Plutarch, the ceremony lasted four days[71]. Projected onto the Roman *Isia*, which began on October 28th, the εὕρεσις fell on October 31st and in the Egyptian calendar on 19th Hathyr. The Egyptian date corresponded to November 15th in the Julian calendar, except for the years 36-39 CE, in which October 31st and 19th Hathyr concurred. This calendar coincidence prompted the introduction of the *Isia* among the *sacra publica*. Since Tiberius had issued a decree against Egyptian cults, it had to be Gaius who made the introduction possible and simultaneously ordered the construction of a temple. Barrett, who questioned Wissowa's connection of the institution of the festival with the building of the *Iseum*, used 17th Hathyr, according to Plutarch the beginning of the ceremony, as the basis for his calculation[72]. He concluded that October 31st and 17th Hathyr coincided in the years

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[67] Snowden (1956), 116.

[68] Wissowa (1902), 353.

[69] 8.831-3: "nos in templa tuam Romana accepimus Isim semideosque canes et sistra iubentia luctus| et, quem tu plangens hominem testaris, Osirim."

[70] After the finding of Osiris followed two days of celebration. The whole festival ended November 3. See also M.R. Salzman *On Roman Time. The Codex-Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford, 1990), 169-76.

[71] *Mor.* 366e.

[72] Barrett (1989), 220-1.

40-43. Therefore, the *Isia* and the *Isaeum* would chronologically fit into Claudius' reign.

The thought that a calendar coincidence prompted the introduction of the *Isia* among the *sacra publica* is very attractive. Maybe a new temple was constructed, or, to put forth another possibility, an already existing one was embellished. The temple in the *campus Martius* comes to mind, the one that had, according to Apuleius, an ancient college. Vespasian had this temple expanded[73]. Could he, demonstrating *pietas* toward the gods who have aided him, also have encouraged the introduction of the *Isia*?

In the primary sources we find only two official acts of introduction, the arrival of Cybele and Elagabalus' bringing of the *baetyl*, the sacred black stone, to Rome. An official ceremony, however, was not the only procedure of official acknowledgement, although it was undoubtedly the most colorful. A cult should also be thought as officially recognized, i.e. a *sacrum publicum*, when its ceremony or ceremonies could take place in Rome, even if only *extra pomerium* or limited to temple structures *intra pomerium*, and when the ceremony found a place in the Roman calendar. In the case of Isis and Sarapis and their *θεοὶ σύνναοι* this meant somewhere in the range of the middle of the first century CE.

Gaius did not explicitly display an interest in these deities. The belief that he was a devotee of the Isiac cult cannot be substantiated. Certainly, Gaius exhibited unconventional behavior, but what could one expect of a man upon whom the Senate had conferred absolute power on arrival in Rome? As the third *princeps* and a direct descendant of the god Augustus he was the first whose claim to the throne was not questioned. He was closer to the gods than to those he ruled and the physical extension of the imperial palace to the Capitol made this only more evident. In short, Gaius' behavior in this instance was a visual display or staging of his heritage and the fading of the border between the acceptable and inadmissible was only a question of time.

2.4) Claudius and Nero

Gaius' successor Claudius was interested in Greek religion and exercised religious tolerance as much as the political situation

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[73] This might be the reason for issuing coins (*aeres*) with an illustration of the *Iseum Campense*. See H. Dressel, "Das Iseum Campense auf einer Münze des Vespasianus," *Sitzungsberichte der königlichen-preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 25 (1909), 640-8.

allowed. He opened the priesthood of Cybele to Roman citizens and had Attis integrated into the cult. That these two actions happened after more than two centuries of the cult's official presence in Rome is certainly not surprising. While one might think that the cult had finally found a socially acceptable form, it should not be forgotten that Roman society had changed as well. In the case of Attis, Claudius officially acknowledged what was already current practice[74].

While indications of anything oriental in Gaius' life tend to be interpreted as signs of decadence and megalomania, this does not apply to Claudius. Scholars do not consider Claudius un-Roman, demented or a devotee of the emasculated oriental Attis as a result of his official acknowledgement of Cybele's favorite. Cybele had been officially received in Republican times, and Attis and Cybele simply belonged together. Claudius' weakness was to succumb to the whims of his freedmen. The *mensa Isiaca*, a bronze tablet with inlaid figures and pseudo-hieroglyphs, includes the name of the emperor Claudius[75]. The dedicator of this piece was a certain Tiberius Claudius Callistus[76], an *aedituus templi Serapi*[77] and, as his name indicates, a freedman of Claudius. The specifically political dimension of Sarapis, his connection with the ruler, made Callistus include the name of his imperial patron on the *mensa*. This find, however, does not help us in pinpointing the date of the official introduction of the *Isia* among Roman cults, the *sacra publica*. As mentioned above, there are various hypotheses, from calendar coincidences to Vespasian's more political interest in the Alexandrian deities, none of which is verifiable in light of the existing data.

Unlike his predecessor Claudius, Nero could stress that he was the great-great-grandson of Augustus. His family background, in combination with the fact that he held an extraordinary social and political position that encouraged individual aggrandizement, easily seduced Nero to use and abuse the system for purely personal reasons. Theoretically, the Senate, the armies, and the populace of Rome could check this abuse. This, however, would only happen when the majority or the leading groups saw their privileges curtailed or lost them altogether. In practice, army commanders flexed their

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[74] A good example is Catullus' poem 63.

[75] Claudius' name was most likely represented in form of an imperial cartouche.

[76] Roullet (1972), 143-4, no. 324.

[77] *AE* 1978, 28.

political muscle most often. In any case, Nero's Principate started out with the promise of a well-balanced reign due to the positive influence of Seneca, Nero's tutor and *amicus*, and the praetorian prefect Burrus.

Besides Seneca another stoic, Chaeremon of Alexandria, who was also an Egyptian priest, had been hired to instruct young Nero[78]. Stoicism with its theory of *logos*, the formative and guiding principle in nature which is identified with *deus*, was compatible with Egyptian deism. The influence of Rome's foremost philosophical and political theory had reached Alexandria, but, what is more interesting, it reflected back to Rome in this specifically Alexandrian combination. Seneca's *de clementia* feeds on this Egyptian background as well[79]. In this literary piece, in essence a recommendation of mercy, which parallels pharaonic hymns, the author celebrates Nero as the sun[80]. Seneca's text is an indication that by the 50's[81] the Egyptian model of the king-god, at least in Rome's intellectual circles, was thought to be a comprehensible and acceptable parallel to reality. There were other analogies, such as Apollo-Helios, Nero's favorite deity. The sun, *dux et princeps moderator luminum reliquorum, mens mundi et temperatio*[82], had its human counterpart, Nero. After the devastating fire of 64, the *princeps* even had a chance of having an appropriate home built. The *domus aurea* became the wordly abode of the sun-*cosmocrator*[83] from which it

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[78] P. W. van der Horst *Chaeremon, Egyptian Priest and Stoic Philosopher, EPRO* 110 (Leiden, 1984)

[79] R. Turcan *Sénèque et les religions orientales, Collection Latomus* 91 (Bruxelles, 1967).

[80] P. Grimal, "Le *De clementia* et la royauté solaire de Néron," *REL* 49 (1971), 205-17 and *Sénèque* (Paris, 1979), 119-31. T. Adam *Clementia Principis. Der Einfluß hellenistischer Fürstenspiegel auf den Versuch einer rechtlichen Fundierung des Principats durch Seneca, Kieler Historische Studien* 11 (Stuttgart, 1970), 41 n. 2: "Nach dem Sonnenhymnus Amenophis' IV. erzeugen die Strahlen der Sonne den Pharao. Gemäß ägyptischer Vorstellung ist der König Sohn oder lebendiges Abbild des Sonnengottes. Vgl. die Bezeichnung des Ptolemaios Epiphanes als υἱὸς τοῦ Ἡλίου auf dem Stein von Rosette (*OGIS* I 90)."

[81] *De clementia* was written and presented to Nero in December 55/6. One would like to think the presentation happened on December 25, *natalis inuicti*, the day of the birth of Horus (Harpocrates).

[82] Cic., *De rep.* 6.17.

[83] H.P. L'Orange, "Nero's Cosmic Hall," in *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World* (Oslo, 1953), 28-34.

was possible to follow the daily and yearly course of the sun without any interference[84].

Nero's extravagance and ultimate suicide precipitated the Principate's first crisis. The ensuing civil war brought forth Vespasian, whom the legions in Alexandria had proclaimed emperor. The city's gods stood on his side and neither Vespasian nor his sons forgot it. The new *princeps*, who had proved that an emperor could be made outside Rome, had to secure his position and, as always, religious renewal helped the new ruler in this task.

3) The Flavians

3.1) Vespasian

As the various pretenders set out to claim the imperial throne after Nero's death, their strife for supremacy left the peripheries of the Roman empire militarily unprotected and vulnerable to the attacks of barbarians. The years from the Civil War up to the murder of Domitian were in Tacitus's words "a story sinister even in peace[85]," but, nevertheless, worth describing. Tacitus not only restated the most common explanation of why a Roman wrote about the city's history, but in his introduction he also revealed part of his understanding of why the Roman people had to suffer through so many adversities. "Rome's unparalleled sufferings supplied ample proof that the gods are indifferent to our tranquility, but eager for our punishment[86]." The historian's declaration proves again that in the Roman *Gedankenwelt*, as propagated by writers, the human and divine plane were reciprocally linked. The human house had to be in order before the gods conveyed tranquility; and tranquility was the Epicurean desideratum and a basic component for the achievement of stoic harmony.

While Otho, who had treacherously eliminated Galba, fought against Vitellius in Italy, Vespasian, commander of three legions in Judaea, worked cautiously with his son Titus, the prefect of Egypt,

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[84] J.-L. Voisin, "*Exoriente sole* (Suétone *Ner.* 6). D'Alexandre à la *Domus Aurea*," in *L'Urbs. Espace urbain et histoire (Ier siècle av. J.C. - IIIe siècle ap. J.C.). CEFR* 98 (1987), 509-43. On the course of the sun pp. 511-2.

[85] *Hist.* 1.3.

[86] *Hist.* 1.3: "nec enim umquam atrocibus populi Romani cladibus magisue iustis iudiciis adprobatum est non esse curae deis securitatem nostram, esse ultionem."

Tiberius Alexander, and especially with C. Licinius Mucianus to secure the eastern half of the empire. Mucianus, the actual mastermind of the operation, was governor of Syria and thus in charge of four legions. Once the legions in Moesia had sided with Vespasian, the Pannonian legions joined them. M. Antonius Primus[87], put in charge by Galba of the *legio VII gemina* in Pannonia, immediately set out for Italy bringing the Dalmatian legions to side with Vespasian. At this point, Mucianus could only follow Primus, while Titus controlled Judaea and Vespasian secured Egypt. The Black Sea Fleet concentrated on strategically important Byzantium, and so Rome was cut off from its most important cereal suppliers[88]. After a successful battle at Cremona, Primus entered Rome on December 21, 69. Mucianus followed some days later and took control of the city. While the Romans had to concentrate all their energies on reorganization and stabilization, Germanic peoples, under the leadership of the Batavian C. Julius Civilis, turned their diversion into a war of liberation. Q. Petillius Caesius Rufus Cerialis, a relative of Vespasian, successfully and quickly crushed this uprising. Vespasian returned to Rome almost a year later, in the fall of 70[89].

The *princeps* had to start an empire-wide restoration program. It encompassed not only the rebuilding of burned temples in the capital and the destroyed infrastructure, but also brought a reinforcement of the political structure, which, in part, was essential for the state's economic recovery. A healthy economy and a functioning state social structure were imperative for the successful survival of hegemonic Rome. Augustus' measures in the religious sphere demonstrates the importance of religion (either in the introduction of a new cult or revival of outmoded ones) in the restructuring and strengthening of a disintegrating state. Vespasian followed Augustus' footsteps in more than one way.

The son of a tax-collector had nothing but a military *imperium*, which Nero had bestowed upon him in 69. He lacked the essential *auctoritas* and *maiestas*. The circulation of stories about divine portents, oracles, and omens, which in retrospect were given prophetic meaning, and the two miracles performed in the Sarapeum of

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[87] Tacitus' character sketch: *Hist.* 2.86.

[88] For the sufferings thus inflicted on Rome see Tac. *Hist.* 4.52.

[89] For a closer look at Vespasian's rise to power see J. Nicols *Vespasian and the partes Flavianae, Historia Einzelschriften* 28 (Wiesbaden, 1978).

Alexandria were intended to promote him as a worthy successor[90]. Vespasian's humorous comments about various portents toward the end of his life and his final words: *uae, puto, deus fio*[91], seem to suggest that he did not really believe in omens and the like but simply used them manipulatively. K. Scott even put forth the notion that Vespasian did not concern himself with such matters but left them to his adherents and the priests of Sarapis[92]. Some of Vespasian's actions, however, strongly suggest the opposite. In his relation to omens, portents, and miracles, this new *princeps* was not different from any other inhabitant of the Roman empire. Retroactive belief in divine signs as expressions of divine opinions about conditions and opportunities was simply a conviction enforced by tradition. Acceptance or rejection of these divine signs and their interpretation depended on internal and external conditions experienced by the individual or the state.

Among the portents and omens surrounding Vespasian's ascension "the miracles of Alexandria stand by themselves" and can "even be construed as an effort to work up something resembling a Vespasian myth[93]." Tacitus, ever eager to unmask sycophants, added to the description that "both these incidents are still vouched for by eye-witnesses, though there is now nothing to be gained by lying[94]." Vespasian, who controlled Egypt in no one's name but his own, had been elevated *de facto* to the highest political position available in Egypt: that of the pharaoh[95]. As such he was thought by virtue of his office to have divine powers. He was not only a medium through which the divine manifested itself, as in the case of medieval Christian kings who, after their coronations, tried their religiously imbued medical skills on lepers, but a god. Vespasian, the embodiment of Horus, randomly displayed his divinity by healing a blind man and a lame one. Both petitioners declared that Sarapis had sent them to

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[90] A. Henrichs, "Vespasian's Visit to Alexandria," *ZPE* 3 (1968), 51-80 and R. Lattimore, "Portents and Prophecies in Connection with the Emperor Vespasian," *CJ* 29 (1931), 441-9.

[91] Suet. *Vesp.* 23. For more on Vespasian's final statement see Fishwick (1987), vol. 1.1, 295-300.

[92] *The Imperial Cult under the Flavians* (New York, ²1975), 10-1, 19.

[93] Lattimore (1931), 446.

[94] Tac. *Hist.* 4.81.

[95] While Galba was emperor, Titus visited Memphis (Suet. *Tit.* 5.3.: "quamquam suspicionem auxit, postquam Alexandriam petens in consecrando apud Memphin boue Apide diadema gestauit, de more quidem rituque priscae religionis.") The priests of Memphis had always been influential power-brokers.

him. This makes sense on two accounts. Sarapis was, since the time of the Ptolemies, together with Isis, the mythological mother of Horus, the supreme state god, and possessed healing properties like his consort. The living son of healer gods could not but help.

Even if these two 'miracles' were mere fabrications or manipulations to create a 'Vespasian myth,' its creation followed a logical pattern provided by the geographical context in which Vespasian had placed himself. Outside this context, it became the story of a man who possessed superhuman abilities and was, therefore, worthy to be declared the rightful successor to the supreme political position that the Julio-Claudians had claimed by means of heredity since the death of Augustus. As Alexandria had harbored and protected Vespasian, the temple of Isis in the *campus Martius*[96] sheltered him and Titus on the night of their return to Rome[97]. Vespasian and his immediate successors remained attached to Sarapis and Isis. The two gods deserved Flavian reverence since their place of origin, Egypt, had been so integral to Vespasian's ascension. Reverence was also essential in the appeasement of the gods, who would bring forth the *pax deorum* and, reciprocally, the *pax Romanorum*. The necessity to placate the gods is also seen in the reported senatorial decision to have the religious buildings, primarily on the Capitol[98], rebuilt before the secular ones[99].

The ever-present figure of Alexander the Great and the power of his myth played an important role in the propaganda of Vespasian as the worthiest successor. Whoever came to Egypt, especially to Alexandria[100], on the way to or in the process of claiming the highest possible political position available to an individual, would place himself in the tradition of the mythological Alexander. The Romans were the heirs of the Hellenistic world, its traditions, *Gedankenwelt*, and territories. And as Rome's political system changed from the Republican oligarchy to the Principate, its ruler

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[96] The temple of Sarapis was adjacent to it and in the same precinct (Richardson 1992), 211-2.

[97] Dressel (1909), plate IV. The enlarged photograph of the sesterce shows the difference of this temple from the one depicted on Egnatius' coin (see Chapter 2, n. 60).

[98] Description in Tac. *Hist.* 3.71-3. The popular interpretation of the destruction as a sign of the gods' anger and of the passing of world dominion to the nations north of the Alps *Hist.* 4.54.

[99] Tac. *Hist.* 4.4.

[100] Ps.- Call. I. 30-33 on the foundation of Alexandria.

would be heir to the immensely powerful myth of Alexander. Augustus used it. He apparently visited a mummy supposed to be Alexander and used Alexander's effigy on the imperial seal before his own[101].

The clearest parallel with Alexander in Vespasian's ascent to power is his visit to the oracle on Mount Carmel, a baetyl comparable to the one in the oasis of Siwah[102]. It prophesied to him that whatever greatness he imagined for himself and more would come true, and the Jewish historian Josephus, then a prisoner, predicted that Vespasian would become emperor[103]. Less obvious was the connection with the supreme deity, in Alexander's case Zeus or Ammon, in Vespasian's Sarapis. The request of two sick men to be healed by Vespasian in the Alexandrian Sarapeum because the god had suggested it to them in their dreams emphasize the elevated position Vespasian sought, propagated, and would eventually hold[104].

Although the propagated connection between a Roman *princeps* and the god Sarapis was a novelty, it was effective because the necessary building blocks had not only been in place for almost a century but had also gone through various stages of development. These essential elements were the extraordinary social, political and religious position of the emperor enhanced by imperial worship and the concept of the *diui filius*. In addition, monarchical rule of one best reflected the basic principle of Rome's foremost political ideology, stoicism. Since there had never been a specifically formulated promotional program to advance the *princeps*, the system that had been put in place by Augustus to safeguard his own position had a natural flexibility and an internal dynamic. Thus, Vespasian, as other *principes*, could choose Sarapis. It was not the cult of Isis they embraced, but the universal characteristics, or abstractions, of Isis and her consort.

3.2) Domitian

The reign of Titus was too short and the records are too scanty to show anything more than a continuation of Vespasian's politics. It is doubtful, however, that Titus' leadership style would have been the

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[101] Suet. *Aug.* 18 and 50.

[102] On Alexander's visit to Siwah, the description of the oracle, and the priest's addressing of Alexander as son of Zeus see D.S. *Hist.* 17.49.2-5.3, Curt. 4.7.23 and 4.7.25-7, Pl. *Alex.* 26.6-27.6, and Arr. *An.* 3.3-4.

[103] Suet. *Vesp.* 5.6.

[104] Tac. *Hist.* 4.81.

same as that of his father[105]. The reign of Domitian, whom Pliny the Younger labeled a most savage beast[106], stands out as an example of personal extravagance and extreme power abuse. While one can blame the individual, one should not forget that once a person grasped the extra social, political, religious, and economic significance of the position of *princeps*, the office could encourage extreme, i.e. unacceptable, behavior. Only the elimination of the person displaying such behavior, which of all control mechanisms is the most extreme, served as an effective countermeasure. But physical elimination does not instantly wipe out, for example, a person's accomplishments or innovations that originated in a given historical context. They simply remain forever shaping the future, i.e. as long as the social, political, economic, and ideological structure remains basically the same.

In the final battle between Vitellius and Primus for control over Rome, Domitian avoided detection by putting on a linen mantle and thus disguising himself as a priest[107]. In Suetonius' version, Domitian dressed himself specifically as an Isiac[108]. The problem is that no Isiac festival is assigned to December 19. On this date, however, the Romans celebrated the *Opalia*[109]. The goddess Ops was regarded as Saturn's wife and based on the Greek model, the mother of Jupiter[110]. She could also be equated with Isis[111]. It certainly makes sense, as Tacitus reported, that Domitian, in remembrance of his successful escape, built a shrine to Jupiter the Preserver and later, as emperor, a larger temple to Jupiter the Guardian. The account of Domitian as a fleeing Isiac, as narrated by Suetonius, is

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[105] A. Garzetti *From Tiberius to the Antonines. A History of the Roman Empire AD 14-192*, trans. J.R. Foster (London, 1974), 258-9.

[106] Compared to Trajan Domitian was a "*immanissima belua plurimo terrore*" (*Pan.* 49.8).

[107] Tac. *Hist.* 3.74.1: "Domitianus (...) sollertia liberti lineo amictu turbae sacricolarum immixtus ignoratusque apud Cornelium primum paternum clientum iuxta Uelabrum delituit."

[108] Suet. *Dom.* 1.4: "bello Uitelliano confugit in Capitolium (...) sed irrumpentibus aduersariis et ardente templo apud aedituum clam pernoctauit ac mane Isiaci celatus habitu interque sacrificulos uriae superstitionis (...) contulisset (...)."

[109] A festival concluding the various celebrations dealing with sowing and harvest.

[110] For example Pl. *Mil.* 1082: "postriduo natus sum ego (...) quam Iuppiter ex Ope natus est."

[111] Var. *L.* 5.57: "principes dei Caelum et Terra. hi dei idem qui Aegypti Serapis et Isis (...) in Latio Saturnus et Ops (...)."

nothing more than a clever fiction based on Vespasian's employment of Sarapis and Domitian's extensive public works 'program' that included the refurbishing of the *Iseum Campense*[112].

In commemoration of the restoration, Domitian had an obelisk set up in the temple[113]. On the east side of this obelisk is a picture of Isis crowning Domitian with the hieroglyphic text: "The autocrator loved by Isis and Ptah: may he live like Re[114]." Isis' action, however, is most intriguing. It suspends Egyptian tradition that has pharaohs or emperors as suppliants standing in front of Isis or Osiris and handing a gift to the deity. A good example for this is the temple gate from Kalabasha, on which Augustus, depicted as a pharaoh, stands before Osiris and Isis. He is the one giving. Here, Augustus symbolically gives the land of Nubia to Isis, and not the other way around[115]. Put up inside the temple of Isis, the obelisk and its message were aimed at the adherents of the cult although only a few could probably read the hieroglyphic text and what they could read were badly written hieroglyphs[116].

Domitian had an arch built as part of the restoration of the *Iseum Campense*. This edifice, depicted on an Alexandrian coin issued during Domitian's reign[117] and on the sarcophagus of the Hate-

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[112] Eutrop. *Brev.* 7.23.5: "Romae quoque multa opera fecit in his Capitolium et forum Transitorium, diuorum porticus et Isium ac Serapium."

[113] This is the obelisk now in Piazza Navona. It should also be mentioned that after the restoration of the Isis temple in Beneventum, Domitian had put up an obelisk to commemorate this occasion as well. The hieroglyphic text on one side of the obelisk, which A. Ermann, "Obelisken römischer Zeit. I. Obelisken in Beneventum," *RM* 8 (1893), 210-8, translated, p. 213, is most revealing. "Im Jahre 8 unter der Majestät des Horus 'der starke Stier,' des Königs von Ober- und Unterägypten, des Herrn der beiden Länder, 'Morgenstern? Geschenk von allen Göttern,' des Sohnes des Re, des Herrn der Diademe, Domitianus der ewig lebt (...)." The same traditional text with Hadrian's instead of Domitian's name has been deciphered on the obelisk found near the *Aqua Claudia* in the *via Labicana*. A. Ermann, "Obelisken römischer Zeit. II. Der Obelisk des Antinous," *RM* 11 (1896), 113-21, based on this evidence, concluded that the final burial place of Antinous was in Rome and not in the newly founded Antinoöpolis! More reasonably J. Beaujeu *La religion romaine à l'apogée de l'empire*, 2 vls. (Paris, 1955), vol. 1, 254-5 argued that the obelisk was initially set up in Antinoöpolis.

[114] Malaise *L'inventaire* (1972), 206.

[115] The gate from Kalabasha (55 km south of Assuan) is now in the Egyptian Museum Berlin-Charlottenburg.

[116] For description and evaluation of this Egyptianizing monument see Malaise (1972), 203-7.

[117] B. Sesler, "Arco di Domiziano all' Iseo Campense in Roma," *Rivista Itali-*

rii[118], has been identified as the *arco di Camillo* which was destroyed in 1585[119]. Castagnoli identified the standing statue under the main arch as Minerva and, since a temple of Minerva was on the east side of the *Iseum*, he thought it to be the eastern entrance of the *Iseum Campense*[120]. Roullet thought this "a rather distorted explanation" and considered the *arcus* "as the proper entrance to the sanctuary of Minerva, *near* the Iseum (*'ad* Isis')[121]." A look at her plan of the *campus Martius* does not, however, seem to confirm her explanation[122]. Especially when we consider that on this plan the *arcus* is integrated as part of the temple structure and the western entrance, the so-called 'Giano accanto alla Minerva,' seems to have stood in closer proximity to a larger Minerva sanctuary, the *templum Mineruae Chalcidicae* built under Domitian, than the *arcus*. The much smaller *aedicula Mineruae* stood north of this arch. There is no question that the preposition *ad* can mean *near* but it can also mean *in contact with, on, at,* or *in front of*. The hypothesis of the *arcus* as the eastern entrance to the temple structure of Isis and Sarapis in the *campus Martius* remains the most plausible especially in view of the preposition *ad*. Turcan explained the representation of Minerva on the *arcus* on the grounds that Domitian honored Minerva, who shared particular attributes with Isis-Neith of Saïs[123]. This combination is, although intriguing, not decisive and another explanation, besides the closeness to the *templum Mineruae Chalcidicae* and *aedicula Mineruae*, is plausible. The integration of Minerva, the third member of the Capitoline Triad, on an entrance arch of a temple structure dedicated to Isis and by extension to Sarapis, the Alexandrian equivalent to Jupiter and Juno, completed the triad on the architectural periphery.

Domitian was not an Isiac. In refurbishing the *Iseum Campense*, which had burned down in 80, he displayed the same concern for the capital's representational image as other emperors had done before him. There was, however, also a filial responsibility to take special

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ana di Numismatica e Scienze Affini, vol. 1 ser. 4, 54-55 (1952-3), 88-93.

[118] E. Nash *Bildlexikon zur Topographie des antiken Rom* (Tübingen, 1961), vol. 1, 118-9.

[119] G. Gatti, "Topografia dell' Iseo Campense," *RPAA* 26 (1943-4), 117-63.

[120] F. Castagnoli, "Gli edifici rappresentati in un rilievo del sepulcro degli Haterii," *BCAR* 69 (1941), 65-6, pl. II.

[121] Roullet (1972), 25.

[122] Roullet (1972), 348.

[123] Turcan (1989), 93.

care of the temple that had sheltered his father and brother. Domitian showed respect toward the gods, especially Sarapis, the advancer of the *auspicium imperii*, that had stood on the family's side during the most critical period of claiming imperial power.

Domitian particularly promoted the cult of the Flavian *gens*. It should not only be seen as the *princeps'* attempt to promote his own divinity[124] but also as a final and comprehensive attempt to put the second dynasty on an equal footing with the Julio-Claudian house. The final objective was not divinity, which was only an ultimately convenient by-product. Vespasian and Titus had been deified, the worship of the emperor's *genius* was in place since Augustus, and in light of the reverence a Roman had to demonstrate toward his deceased family members, Domitian's construction of a temple was not a sign of orientalization. It was more a consequence of combining these existing elements[125] and in effect a parallel to the Julio-Claudian model of constructing temples for their divine ancestors[126]. In short, the *domus Flauia* had evolved into the *domus diuina*.

Malaise concluded from eleven statue and relief fragments that there had been a sanctuary of Isis in the Flavian palace (*domus Flauia*)[127]. These fragments are not surprising, when we consider the importance of Egypt and its deities for Vespasian,. Their presence, however, should not be interpreted as a sign that Domitian had a private temple and consequently, although not publicly avowed, was a cult initiate. This hypothetical sanctuary area could as easily have been a room similar to those in the house of Augustus. Or, there is Hadrian's Tiburtine villa to mention a more elaborate

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[124] Fishwick (1987), vol. 1.1, 32-45, "Divinity and Worship," (1991) vol. 2.1, 423-35, "*Domus divina*," and Hammond (1959), (Chapter Six: "Religious Elements in the position of the Emperor"), 203-43.

[125] The same is true of the development of court ceremonies A. Alföldi, "Die Ausgestaltung des monarchischen Hofzeremoniells am römischen Kaiserhof," *RM* 49 (1934), 1-118 and "Insignien und Tracht der römischen Kaiser," *RM* 50 (1935), 1-158. Both articles were reprinted as *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreich* (Darmstadt, 1970).

[126] A good discussion on this topic is M. Torelli, "Culto imperiale e spazi urbani in età flavia," in *CEFR* 98 (1987), 563-82.

[127] Malaise (1972), 222: "L'ensemble de ces documents permet de supposer que la *domus Flauia* abritait une chapelle isiaque. L'hypothèse est confirmée par un dédicace provenant également de la *domus Flauia*, consacrée à Sérapis par un affranchi impérial du début du IIIe s." The description of the fragments (nos. 396-406), 219-22.

villa embracing Egypt as theme. Even statue or relief fragments are not evidence enough. A statue representing an Egyptian deity could have been placed among Graeco-Roman statues. Relief fragments, if not part of a wall decoration, could have been parts of altars dedicated to Graeco-Roman gods that shared characteristics with Egyptian ones, which led to their artistic inclusion on an altar. In addition, homage paid to a mystery god did not necessarily mean initiation in the specific cult. Not all worshippers of Demeter, for example, were initiates in the Eleusian mysteries. The eleven fragments hardly support the hypothesis that the *domus Flauia* was equipped with a sanctuary of Isis.

Even the reason for Domitian's downfall was not that he had styled himself *dominus et deus*, an impudence the Senate would not have wanted to avenge ten years after the fact, had it really been completely unacceptable. Besides Domitian's personality, internal and external reasons caused Domitian's murder. His vicious suppression of the Senate led to an internal instability while the most important border zone along the Lower Danube had caved in and Rome had experienced a Varian-like fiasco. Despite the internal power struggle between the *princeps* and the Senate, Rome's political machine, once tossed into a self-protective mode, could unite, concentrate on an external problem, and defuse the threat on the Lower Danube. Since the stabilization was primarily a military and not an economic matter, the necessary flow of precious metals, the backbone of Rome's economy, remained undisturbed[128].

Although the Senate's immediate acclamation of M. Cocceius Nerva, who most probably had a hand in the plot, prevented a power vacuum from forming, the new emperor, mainly because of his advanced age, could not charge out and annex Dacia with all its mineral resources. This was left to M. Ulpius Traianus, who annexed Dacia as a province and seems to have set out to do the same with the Parthian territory. Trajan embraced Jupiter and the titles of Rome's main god rubbed off on the *princeps optimus*[129]. Beyond this, Trajan displayed admiration for Alexander the Great[130], which incited, by duplicating the original, the use of the

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[128] Domitian, so it seems, did not strain the state resources with his building projects and campaigns.

[129] *BMCRE* vol. 3, nos. 224, 229, 434, 448, and 462.

[130] R. Syme *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), vol. 2, 770-1.

epithet *inuictus* in connection with the emperor[131] and the joining of divine names with the term *uictor*[132]. Once applied and made a part of an emperor's *persona*, such attributes became common imperial characteristics which successors could then reactivate and modify.

4) The Antonines

4.1) Hadrian

When P. Aelius Hadrianus was proclaimed emperor in August of 117, he already had a distinguished military and administrative career behind him. Trajan, who had set out to beat Parthia into submission, left his successor with the resulting weakened state of affairs in the East. And unlike Dacia, which could offer the conquerors its bounteous gold and salt mines, Parthia[133] nor its semi-nomadic populace could reimburse Rome for the expenses that had been swallowed up by Trajan's campaign. Hadrian successfully secured the empire's defense lines and restored the Flavian *status quo* in the East. His extensive travels through the various provinces served multiple purposes[134]. In the first place, they brought the emperor in contact with the provincial elite and gave him a first-hand look at the administrative and military organization as well as the geographical and topographical layout of the various areas. Secondly, the appearance of an emperor strengthened the link between the center and the periphery. Not only must the imperial entourage have been impressive as it moved from one location to another but it visually emphasized that the emperor really existed and that he cared. The provincial elite, whose prestige had received a boost through this imperial visit, was consequently bound closer to the emperor and the capital, Rome. Hadrian's reorganizations, revisions, and innovations strengthened imperial power, recharged Rome's political *ad-hoc* system and enabled it to survive, and made it possible for the empire

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[131] Plin. *Pan.* 8.2: "adlata erat ex Pannonia laurea id agentibus dis, ut inuicti imperatoris exortum uictoriae insigne decoraret."

[132] S. Weinstock, "Victor and Invictus," *HThR* 50 (1957), 211-47 provides a historical survey of these epithets.

[133] N.C. Debevoise *A Political History of Parthia* (Chicago, 1938) and K.-H. Ziegler *Die Beziehungen zwischen Rom und dem Partherreich* (Wiesbaden, 1964).

[134] On the general theme of imperial travels H. Halfmann *Itinera principum. Geschichte und Typologie der Kaiserreisen im römischen Reich, HABES* 2 (Stuttgart, 1986).

to consolidate its resources until the repeated onslaught of various Germanic and Sarmatian tribes.

Hadrian was a philhellene. It was not so much his attachment to Antinous, who happened to drown in the Nile, that made Egypt interesting to him as it was his profound interest in Greek culture[135]. Although Rome had successfully made this culture its own, it was still Alexandria that could claim to have been the guardian of and the bridge to the admired intellectual and artistic past. A place where this knowledge had been stored was not only the *Mouseion* in the imperial palace but also the library in the Sarapeum[136]. For the Roman interested in the past Alexandria was what Constantinople would become for the Renaissance intellectual, a place where the treasures of one's cultural past were stored and, therefore, a place where the past was still alive and within reach. Hadrian understood this and the construction of his elaborate villa in Tibur expressed his understanding of the importance of Alexandria[137].

The deification of Antinous, which some communities carried out, and the naming of a newly founded city in Egypt as Antinoöpolis were products of Hellenistic modes of thinking. Beaujeu's suggestion that the deification of Antinous was more a motif of artistic inspiration than an object of adoration[138] reinforces the idea of Hellenistic influence. Naturally, an emperor's interests, wishes, and desires had wider implications than those of an average inhabitant of the empire. His interests could set trends. Hadrian's interest in Egypt found itself replicated among the populace, for whom the collecting of Egyptian or Egyptianizing things became fashionable[139]. The renovation of

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[135] R. Syme, "Hadrian the Intellectual," in *Les empereurs romains d'Espagne*, ed. A. Piganiol *Colloques internationaux du centre national de la recherche scientifique. Sciences humaines* (Paris, 1965), 243-9.

[136] F. Ritschl *Die alexandrinischen Bibliotheken unter den Ptolemäern* (Breslau, 1838) and the less scholarly L. Canfora *The Vanished Library* (London, 1989).

[137] M. Taliaferro Boatwright *Hadrian and the City of Rome* (Princeton, 1987), 142-50, F. Coarelli *Guide archeologiche Laterza*, vol. 5: *Lazio* (Rome and Bari, 1982), 44-72, N. Hannestad *Roman Art and Imperial Policy* (Aarhus, 1988), 209 and H. Mielsch *Die römische Villa. Architektur und Lebensform* (München, 1987), 75-85, and 104.

[138] Beaujeu (1955), 256: "il est évident que le dieu Antinoüs fut beaucoup moins un objet d'adoration qu'un motif d'inspiration artistique (...)." On the obelisk of Antinous see Boatwright (1987), 239-60.

[139] Vidman (1970), 6 and 108 with a reference to Beaujeu (1955), 220-57, especially 230-41.

the Sarapeum at Alexandria[140], however, had nothing to do with religious affinity or devotion. It was only one among many of the *princeps'* inspired restorations of culturally important sites. Hadrian's religious interest could not have flooded the whole West and the Roman colonies in the east with an unceasing affection for Egyptian religion[141]. His was an intellectual and not a religious curiosity. Hadrian, the *omnium curiositatum explorator*[142], did not search for forms of salvation but an understanding of the world's mechanisms. This explains his study of strange religions, mystical beliefs, and his mastery of the science of astrology.

A coin type with Isis on Sothis was issued toward the end of Hadrian's reign[143]. This composition was the essential component of an *Iseum*'s frieze decoration[144] and it pointed out the cosmic or astrological relevance of Isis[145]. Alexandrian coins or a cameo[146] on which Hadrian and Sabina appear as Isis and Sarapis are no indication that the two were cult initiates. The depiction is rather evidence of the maintenance of the Ptolemaic tradition, which equated its rulers with the divine couple. This was simply the Ptolemaic form of imperial worship. In addition, the coin type

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[140] Beaujeu (1955), 230: "L'Empereur entreprit des constructions au Sérapeion; la preuve nous en est fournie par un bronze alexandrin de 132/133 montrant le dieu Sérapis debout à droite, la main droite levée vers Hadrien qui se tient debout en face de lui; (...) on admet en général que la figure portant le nom du Prince représente une chapelle destinée au culte de l'Empereur; par son geste du bras, Sérapis l'accueillerait dans son sanctuaire, comme σύνναος."

[141] Vidman (1970), 111: "Hadrian's Vorliebe für die ägyptische Religion (...) überschwemmte den ganzen Westen und im Osten nur römische Kolonien."

[142] Tert. *Apol.* 5.7.

[143] *RIC* vol. 2, 444, no. 826.

[144] Vespasian's coin see Dressel (1909) and Chapter 5 on the *Iseum* in Savaria.

[145] H. Frankfort *Kingship and the Gods. A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (Chicago and London, 1948), 195-6: "(...) anything which seems to come forth from the earth may be considered a manifestation of Osiris and, though it may seem paradoxical to us, this applies to all heavenly bodies. The stars rise at the horizon, and so do the sun and the moon, so that Osiris is even called "he of the horizon from which Re goes forth." But the more usual heavenly representative of Osiris is Orion. (...) The near-by star, Sothis, is Isis. The actual position of the two in the sky is reflected in a Ptolemaic text in which Isis addresses Osiris as follows: "Thy sacred image, Orion in heaven, rises and sets every day; I am Sothis following after him, and I will not forsake him."

[146] *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, vol. 5.2 (Zürich and München, 1990), 'Isis,' no. 137.

belongs to a series of coins issued in honor of the various Roman provinces[147].

Greek civilization, in the transmission of which the Ptolemies played an important role, found in Hadrian, in contrast to Nero, a convincing and powerful proponent. The times had changed, for the "world which Hadrian governed - and which he symbolised - was Greco-Roman, now brought to concord and harmony[148]." In this context the Greek formula Διὶ Ἡλίῳ μεγάλῳ Σαράπιδι[149] appeared, expressing the completion of this cultural fusion in which Ptolemaic Alexandria had played such an important role.

The primary political interests of Hadrian's successor, Antoninus Pius, lay in Rome and Italy. This focus shows what Hadrian had achieved with his provincial and administrative policies. Antoninus Pius did not show the same cultural interests as his imperial predecessor. Nonetheless, his issuance of a coin commemorating his wife Faustina[150] shows that the figure of Isis had become an acceptable representation outside its original context. The choice of Isis as the reverse motif makes sense in view of her role in the search for her spouse Osiris and his function as god of the Underworld.

4.2) Marcus Aurelius

When Marcus Aurelius[151] and Lucius Verus became joint rulers in March 161, the world was a far cry from the harmonious whole it seemed in 147 when the Romans celebrated the 900th anniversary of their city with the feeling that a *saeculum aureum* had dawned once more. Aelius Aristides' Εἰς Ῥώμην, in which the empire is depicted as a harmonious collection of city-states under Rome's leadership, is in political terms unquestionably a fanciful piece, but it nicely conveys a feeling of general contentment[152]. Reality, however, caught up with this *saeculum aureum*, when the Parthians annexed Armenia, and Germanic and Sarmatian tribes menaced the

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[147] *BMCRE* vol. 3, 341-9: "*Province* Types" and 487-96: "Adventus Types."

[148] Syme (1965), 249.

[149] Vidman (1970), 116.

[150] *BMCRE* vol. 4, 255: An *aureus* depicting Isis seated on a dog and holding a *sistrum*.

[151] On biographical data for Antoninus Pius see Garzetti (1974) and on Marcus Aurelius A. Birley *Marcus Aurelius* (London, 1966).

[152] Aelius Aristides also composed a hymn to Sarapis (A. Höfler *Der Sarapis-hymnus des Ailios Aristeides, Tübinger Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft*, Heft 27 (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1935).

northern frontier. The Danube river and the Roman legions were no longer effective deterrents in view of the invading masses. The Romans were unaware of the fact that this was the beginning of the migration of Germanic peoples. The Roman world included the *barbaricum* only as an antithesis to the civilized world and, because of the *barbaricum*'s lack of civilization, the Romans had no interest in it. The Roman world stopped at the *limes*. Then there was the plague[153] that ferociously decimated the empire's population, and thus gnawed on the basis of revenue and reduced the pool of available recruits.

The two emperors, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, left Rome in the Spring of 168 to deal with the problems on the northern frontier. After dealing with the troublemakers, the Marcomanni and Quadi, the emperors prepared to spend the winter of 168-9 in Aquileia. Following the recommendation of Galen, the court-physician, the two *augusti* left the bitter-cold and plague-ridden Aquileia for the more comforting Rome in midwinter. Two days into the journey, Lucius had a stroke. He died three days later[154]. Marcus Aurelius had planned to take on the German tribes once more in the Spring 169. The plague and the death of Lucius Verus, however, prevented him from implementing his plan.

The Marcomanni and the Quadi seized the opportunity. Encountering no resistance, they besieged Aquileia and destroyed Opitergium[155]. Relief came in the person of Ti. Claudius Pompeianus, the governor of Pannonia inferior, who pushed the invaders back[156]. After reorganizing the army, Marcus Aurelius left Rome toward the end of the year. There was no swift success; decisive victory over the invaders occurred not until 171. Again, the peace arrangement, which had been hammered out, did not hold and in 172 Roman troops set out across the Danube[157].

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[153] Suggestions on what kind of pestilence this was range from smallpox, and exanthematous typhus, to bubonic plague.

[154] *HA Marc.* 14.7-8; *HA Ver.* 9.10-1.

[155] On the dating of the Marcomanni-Quadi attack on Aquileia and Opitergium see J. Fitz, "Der markomannisch-quadische Angriff gegen Aquileia und Opitergium," *Historia* 15 (1966), 336-67.

[156] Marcus Aurelius, over the objections of Faustina and Lucilla, married the latter, Lucius Verus' widow, to Pompeianus.

[157] Column of Marcus Aurelius, scene 3: the personified Danube watches the troops cross a pontoon bridge. On the chronology of the Marcomannic Wars see Birley (1966), Appendix III.

During this campaign the lightning and the rain miracle occurred[158]. Although the exact chronology of the events eludes us, the sequence of the two 'miracles' can be established with the help of the Aurelian column. Of the one hundred and sixteen scenes illustrated on the column, the lightning miracle is the eleventh and the rain miracle, the sixteenth depiction. In addition, there is numismatic evidence that aids in establishing a chronology. There are *prouidentia* coins (the legend reads: *deorum prouidentia*) from 172 and an aureus of 173, which depicts Victory crowning the *imperator*, who is holding a lance and a thunderbolt[159]. Hence, the lightning miracle occurred in 172 or 173.

The same chronological uncertainty holds for the rain miracle. Dio's setting of the event in 174 has been proven untenable. Especially the Mercurius coin series of 173, and in one instance the reproduction of an Egyptianizing temple with a figure, identified as Hermes-Thoth, as well as P. Helvius Pertinax' *cursus honorum*[160] have lent a hand in approximating the date of the miracle[161]. Pertinax was, like Ti. Claudius Pompeianus, Marcus Aurelius' son-in-law, commander of a *vexillatio*, then *legatus* of the *legio I adiutrix*, whose home base was Brigetio. Before fighting the Quadi, the *legio I* fought in Raetia and Noricum in 171[162]. According to E. Birley's[163] and J. Fitz'[164] hypotheses, Pertinax became governor of Moesia superior around 174 before advancing to consular rank. As H.G. Pflaum has pointed out, intensive wars generally speed up careers of valuable military leaders. Pertinax could have hardly remained a *legatus legionis* for four years. Thus, the *legio I adiutrix*' operations under his command against the Quadi could only have taken place in the years 172 and 173, and the rain miracle occurred in one of these two years.

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[158] About the fusion of the two miracles, the pagan and Christian literary sources, and various scholarly discussion see G. Barta, "Legende und Wirklichkeit - das Regenwunder des Marcus Aurelius," *Acta Classica Univ. Scient. Debrecen* 4 (1968), 85-91.

[159] *BMCRE* vol. 4, 1425-7.

[160] Summary of the arguments in Barta (1968), 90-1.

[161] J. Guey, "Encore 'la pluie miraculeuse,'" *RPh* 22 (1948), 16-62.

[162] Here I follow Barta's outline.

[163] "Beförderungen und Versetzungen im römischen Heer," *Carnuntum Jahrbuch* 3 (1957), 18-9.

[164] "Legatio Legionum Pannoniae Superioris," *AAntHung* 9 1961), 165-6.

The battle location and who led the troops are enigmatic as well. For our purpose it does not matter whether the battle occurred in the land of the Cotini or the Quadi or happened in 172 or 173. The important fact is that the Romans' situation during the battle against the Quadi became extremely precarious and, literally, only a miracle could turn the tables around. Taking the depictions of the Aurelian column as a lead, one notices that in contrast to the artistic rendering of the lightning miracle, Marcus Aurelius is absent in the representation of the rain miracle. Its general is a young warrior, who, following Eusebius' account, has been identified as Pertinax[165].

Marcus Aurelius summoned a thunderbolt from heaven, which struck and destroyed one of the enemy's military engines. "It is not hard," according to A. Birley, "to reconstruct what happened. Marcus may indeed have prayed during a thunderstorm, for lightning to strike the enemy[166]." The postulation that Marcus Aurelius prayed for lightning to strike the enemy is not necessary. Whatever the content of the prayer, there was a thunderstorm and while the emperor prayed, a lightning bolt struck one of the enemy's siege engines. The two unrelated events became in retrospect related. That is how the Roman mind worked. It followed simple patterns of linear causality. More important than any reconstruction, though, is the fact that Marcus Aurelius had this incident commemorated. It could and can be seen on the Aurelian column and on coins. The thunderbolt links Marcus Aurelius to Jupiter, the god whom Trajan embraced and whose titles the *princeps optimus* appropriated.

The *HA* reports that the praying Marcus Aurelius caused rain to fall just as he had previously caused lightning to strike. Christian sources, on the other hand, like to stress that praying Christian soldiers induced their God to perform the miracle. According to Xiphilinus, who inserted his version into Dio's epitome, Marcus Aurelius thanked the Christian soldiers of the *legio XII* by conferring the epithet κεραυνοβόλος (*fulminatrix*) on the legion. The fact that this legion had been pointed out as κεραυνοφόρος (*fulminata*, an epithet it had carried for already over a century) in an earlier passage does not discredit Dio's account, which has the Egyptian ἱερογραμ-

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[165] Th. Mommsen *Hermes* 30 (1895), 90-106, A. von Domaszewski *RhM* 49 (1894), 612-9 and *Neue Heidelberger Jahrbücher* 5 (1895), 107-23.

[166] Birley (1966), 234.

ματεύς Arnouphis[167] bring about the miracle and, quite naturally, not the Christians.

Insriptions set up by leading military men stationed in Pannonia, Moesia inferior and Dacia attest to the impression this wonder made[168]. Moreover, Marcus Aurelius had a series of coins issued, which depicted, on the reverse, an Egyptianizing temple with a statue of Hermes-Toth inside[169]. But why would Marcus Aurelius, next to Epictetus the most prominent representative of stoicism in the second century and the author of the τὰ εἰς ἑαυτόν, have an Egyptian magus in his entourage? Why have him travel with the troops? Why issue coins on which his wife, Faustina II, and Isis share the space on the reverse[170]? Why celebrate his *religio* by employing the figure of Hermes-Toth[171]?

Any answer is, of course, a little more complex than itinerant priests of foreign cults were more active converting soldiers in the second and third century CE. The *opinio communis* found in most handbooks on Roman religion that the appearance of oriental deities and their cults, which attracted foremost members of the demi-monde and the generally underprivileged, were a sign of Hellenic brilliance giving way to the irrational (the emotional) will not do. For one, Egypt, among all countries in Rome's sphere of interest and control, had the oldest historical tradition. Its history, for which monuments of incredible size were visual proof, reached back into remote times and yet existed beyond a merely mythological context. Learned men from Egypt, priests, astrologers, and magicians, possessed ancient knowledge and knew of ancient *formulae* which had survived the millennia as sacred knowledge and granted power. Marcus Aurelius knew this and used it.

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[167] Arnouphis was, as an inscription from Aquileia confirms (*Bulletin Epigraphique* 202a, 239) a historical person (*Ἀρνοῦφις ἱερογραμματεὺς τῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ Τερέντ(ιος) Πρεῖσκος Θεῷ Ἐπιφανεῖ*).

[168] I. Tóth, "Marcus Aurelius' Miracle of the Rain and the Egyptian Cults in the Danube Region," *Az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Ókori Történeti Tanszékeinek Kiadványai* 17, *Studia Aegyptica* 2 (1976), 101-13 focused on the connection between Arnouphis' appearance in the Danubian region and the spread of Egyptian cults in the Danubian provinces.

[169] W. Weber *Ein Hermes-Tempel des Kaisers Marcus, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, phil.-hist. Klasse 1910.7 (Heidelberg, 1910).

[170] *RIC* vol. 3, 351, nos. 1725 and 1726.

[171] G. Fowden *The Egyptian Hermes. A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan World* (Cambridge, 1986).

Further, the Roman stoic theory of *logos* could easily be aligned with Egyptian deism, and, especially since the days of Nero's tutor Chaeremon of Alexandria, an Egyptian priest could have a place in an emperor's following. Since Isis and Sarapis were deities of the Roman pantheon, this should tamper the surprise that Marcus Aurelius could have allowed coins struck which depicted them and other Egyptian deities. There is also the point that these types of coins convey more than an aesthetically pleasing picture or, in the case of Hermes-Toth, point to a historical fact as they refer to deities that had been linked to the *domus Augusta*. Isis and Sarapis were the divine equivalent to the living *augustus* and the *augusta*. Marcus Aurelius was, of course, not an initiate of the cult of Isis, but, like his imperial predecessors and successors, he 'employed' an established yet flexible iconography and ideology as well as millenia-old (magical) knowledge.

4.3) Commodus

While Marcus embraced Stoicism and tried to live a well-balanced life, his son Commodus seemed unstable. While Marcus resorted to fighting, Commodus chose to negotiate and conclude peace treaties with the barbarians. In view of the drain on manpower caused by the plague and continuous wars, this was probably an astute but un-Roman decision. Commodus' action was interpreted as weakness and disinterest in the affairs of state. Even if one tried to find his strong points to counterbalance his tainted image, one had soon to admit that the available primary sources univocally declared him irresponsible and maniacal[172]. This character judgement alone, however, does not necessarily make him an adherent of Isis and Sarapis.

Commodus promoted himself as Hercules[173]. Thanks to the inclusiveness of the polytheistic system, however, the emperor who envisioned himself as Hercules incarnate, just like Alexander had apparently done before he entered Tyre[174], could also embrace Isis.

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[172] One inscription describes Commodus *omnium uirtutem exsuperantissimus* (*ILS* 400).

[173] J. Gagé, "La mystique impériale et l'épreuve des 'jeux.' Commode-Hercule et l''anthropologie' héracléenne," *ANRW* II 17.2 (Berlin and New York, 1981), 662-83, Jaczynaska (1981), 631-61, and C. Vermeule, "Commodus, Caracalla und Hercules," in *Festschrift F. Brommer* (Mainz, 1977), 289-94.

[174] Curt. 4.17 and according to Arr. *An.* 3.3 Alexander longed to equal the fame of Perseus and Heracles. Even if these reports were literary fictions, the effect on Commodus and other 'leaders' would have been the same. They were part of a

He had apparently had his head shaven[175] and entertained crowds during processional breaks as *pausarius*[176]. He also wore the mask of Anubis or carried the statue of Anubis, which could mean that he held one of the lower priesthoods.

A gold statue of Commodus as Horus between a bull (Osiris-Apis) and a cow (Isis-Hathor)[177] is not only further evidence of his cultic activities, it can also be considered in light of the Egyptian myth of succession and dynastic rule[178]. Commodus, the son of a *princeps* and destined to be *princeps*, could effortlessly put himself in this tradition, especially since earlier emperors had employed elements of this tradition and paved the way. Gold, silver, and bronze coins from the two final years of Commodus' reign, which depict the *princeps* on the obverse and Sarapis or at times Sarapis and Isis on the reverse[179], do not have a cultic motif as their primary meaning. The reverse legend *Serapidi Conseru(atori)*, which refers to the function of protecting the transport of cereals[180], in combination with *Aug(ustus) Co(n)s(ul) P(ater) P(atriae) S(enatus) C(onsultum)* and the various images point clearly to the political sphere. In addition, these *conseruator* coins recall Trajan's coin issues with the legend *Iuppiter conseruator imperii princeps* and *conseruatori patris patriae*.

Commodus' boundless extravagance was certainly not the only reason for his murder. The motivation was more complex and

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myth of grandeur that could be emulated.

[175] *HA Comm.* 9.4. On the problem of a *caluus* Commodus A. Alföldi, "A Festival of Isis in Rome under the Christian Emperors of the Fourth Century, " *Dissertationes Pannonicae* ser. 2, fasc. 7 (Budapest, 1937), 45 who thinks that the compiler of the *HA* "based his statement on a misunderstood literary account. He had mistaken the expression *Anubim* (or *faciem caninam*) *portare*: he did not know, that this only means, to wear a mask of A. and therefore asserts a little later (9.6) to demonstrate the *studium crudelitatis* of the emperor: *cum Anubin portaret, capita Isiacorum grauiter obtundebat ore simulacri.*" For a different view on the mask issue Heyob (1975), 31, n. 178: "(...) while it is true that the mask of Anubis was in use (...), Anubophors who carried statues of the god Anubis also existed."

[176] *HA Pesc.* 6.8-9.

[177] D.C. *Hist.* 72.15.

[178] H.P. L'Orange *Apotheosis in Ancient Portraiture* (Oslo, 1947), 72 saw in it an expression of Commodus' Egyptian religiosity.

[179] *RIC* vol. 3, nos. 261, 601, 605, 607, 614a, b, 621, 630 and *BMCRE* vol. 4, no. 706, p. 841 * and p. 845 *. Beaujeu (1955) on "les vota Sérapéiens de 190," pp. 377-81. and "Cybèle et Sérapis," pp. 386-8.

[180] A. Alföldi, "Die alexandrinischen Götter und die Vota Publica," *JAC* 8-9 (1965-6), 54-87, especially 54-7.

explanations have to be sought in the widespread alienation of the socially and economically powerful from the political center. Once more the murder of a despotic *princeps* threw the empire into an all-encompassing civil war.

5) The Severi

5.1) Septimius Severus

After Commodus' murder, the city prefect P. Helvius Pertinax, the choice of the Praetorian Guard, ruled for three months. His reactionary rule, an effort to reintroduce Aurelian principles of government and strict discipline, estranged the Senate and the powerful Praetorian Guard who quickly eliminated him.

The Praetorians chose M. Didius Julianus to succeed Pertinax. The provincial armies reacted immediately. The legions of Pannonia superior proclaimed L. Septimius Severus emperor at Carnuntum[181]. In Syria, another key province, the troops opted for C. Pescennius Niger. Septimius Severus, able to outmaneuver Pescennius, entered Rome on June 9, 193, one week after Didius' murder by the Praetorians, who had made him emperor two months earlier.

In order to take care of Pescennius, Septimius Severus named D. Clodius Albinus, who had had a successful military career in Dacia and Germany, Caesar. Septimius defeated Pescennius, who had tried to secure his position from Byzantium. Caught near Issus, Pescennius was executed. Hearing of Pescennius' death, the legions in Britain proclaimed Clodius Albinus Augustus in 196. On the way to secure the German legions for himself, Clodius was defeated and killed near Lugdunum in 197. After four years of civil war, Septimius Severus emerged victorious. At this point, especially in view of the twelve years of Commodus' autocracy, the empire was ripe for modifications to meet the social, ecomomic, and political problems of the day.

In provincial matters it was important to secure the area east of Syria. Septimius Severus did this by creating a buffer zone between Parthia and Syria, whose legions had shown themselves once more an important factor and power broker in one man's struggle for the

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[181] T.D. Barnes, "The Family and Career of Septimius Severus," *Historia* 16 (1967), 87-107 and A. Birley *Septimius Severus* (London, 1971).

Principate. Osroëne, located in north-west Mesopotamia and enclosed by the Khabûr, the Euphrates, and on the north side by Mt. Masius[182], formed, together with the area of Upper Mesopotamia[183], the province Mesopotamia, the wedge between the ever problematic Parthia and Roman Syria. Septimius Severus spent two years in the region. This was to ensure the functioning of the buffer zone and to bind the legions of the area to himself and his successors. Septimius Severus also realized that the economically important Egypt needed reorganization but was unaware that an increase of local control could not remedy the situation. A continuous siphoning of revenues and capital without an appropriate mechanism for maintaining the Egyptian production base had depleted the country since Augustus' time.

The author of Septimius Severus' *uita* in the *HA*, Aelius Spartianus, remarked that the emperor "enjoyed his trip to Alexandria all the more because of the religion of Sarapis[184]." Neither Aelius, nor any other author, provides more detail. Hence we can merely assume that Septimius Severus' visit to the Alexandrian Sarapeum happened in the context of paying homage to the god of the Ptolemies, the protector of Alexandria and the *conseruator imperii*.

The most intriguing evidence, however, is the portraits of Septimius Severus patterned on artistic depictions of Sarapis[185]. McCann has shown that portrait types of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius formed the basis for this artistic representation of Septimius Severus. On the Arch of Severus at Lepcis Magna is the image of the seated Severus, patterned presumedly on the cult statue of Sarapis in the Alexandrian Sarapeum, "in the midst of the Capitoline Triad with the eagle of Jupiter at his feet." According to McCann, the image portrays Septimius Severus' "adopted Roman heritage and his African background through the single, powerful image of the

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[182] A. von Gutschmid *Geschichte Irans und seiner Nachbarländer von Alexander dem Grossen bis zum Untergang der Arsaciden* (Tübingen, 1888), G. Hill *Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia* (Oxford, 1937), and A. Olmstead *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago, 1960).

[183] A.H.M. Jones *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces* (Oxford, 1937), 216-26, Chapter 9: "Mesopotamia," and L. Dilleman *Haute Mésopotamie et pays adjacents* (Paris, 1962).

[184] *Sev.* 17.

[185] A.M. McCann *The Portraits of Septimius Severus, Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*, vol. 30 (Rome, 1968), "The Serapis-Severus Portrait Type IX," 155-68.

syncretistic Jupiter - Serapis[186]." Besides the fact that Septimius Severus did not have to 'adopt' Roman heritage and probably never felt African, the representation is part of a natural development which began with Vespasian's 'political' employment of Sarapis. Embedded in a specific ideological context, it had now found an artistic expression.

It is interesting to note that there are no known coin issues with a Septimius-Sarapis combination[187]. Septimius Severus doubtless propagated the image of himself as a *cosmocrator* and might have thought himself divine or qualified for deification. This he could do as a *diui filius* in the context of a political and ideological system that had developed since Augustus created it[188].

Three denarii with a depiction of the ambitious and learned, ἡ φιλοσόφος, wife of Septimius Severus, Julia Domna, on the obverse and Isis walking with Horus on the reverse, with the legend *saeculi felicitas*[189], illustrate the dynastic aspiration of the family while employing the most suitable myth of imperial succession. Rome's new imperial dynasty promised political stability and economic prosperity.

5.2) M. Aurelius Antoninus (Caracalla)

Antoninus Caracalla, whom Septimius Severus had appointed Caesar at the age of eight in 196 and Augustus at ten in 198, and his younger brother L. Septimius Geta, named Caesar in 198 and Augustus in 209, had to take over the Principate jointly upon the death of their father in 211. Despite Julia Domna's effort to reconcile the two estranged brothers, Antoninus Caracalla had Geta murdered and became sole ruler in 212. In this year Alexandrian coins identify

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[186] McCann (1968), 53.

[187] An association of Jupiter-Sarapis, on the other hand, exists. McCann (1968), 54 on a "reverse type showing Jupiter with the *modius* of Serapis on his head (...)."

[188] McCann (1968), 209: "Both the Jupiter and Serapis allusions indicate Severus' claim to deification, a claim which was not new to Roman imperial art but had never before been so comprehensively and boldly stated. This strengthened claim to divinity associated Severus with the Saviour-King images of succeeding emperors. Jupiter, the ruler of the upper world, and Serapis, the god of the lower world, as well as Severus' historical allusions, are fused in the image of the emperor as a cosmocrator which appears on his coinage. The earthly realm, the heavenly spheres, and the lower world are united in the one image of an all-powerful ruler."

[189] *RIC* vol. 4.1, nos. 577, 645, and 865.

him as *cosmocrator*[190]. On his visit to Alexandria in 215[191], Antoninus Caracalla dedicated to Sarapis the sword with which he supposedly had killed his brother[192]. He made the temple of Sarapis his headquarters[193], gave sacrifice to Sarapis[194] and, like other rulers before him, paid tribute to the memory of Alexander the Great[195]. Then, just like Alexander half a millenium earlier, Antoninus Caracalla, employing the ancient Macedonian phalanx formation, set out to conquer territory east of the relatively secure borders.

Antoninus Caracalla had a temple of Sarapis built on the Quirinal. Its dimensions and elevated location paralleled that of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. The visual suggestion was clear: Sarapis, the originally Alexandrian god, was to be equated with Jupiter. In terms of cultic worship it meant the right of having the procession routes inside the *pomerium*, and it was not, as Aelius Spartianus already noted, the first official introduction of the cult[196]. This architectural enterprise confirmed that Antoninus Caracalla was, as an Alexandrian inscription from 216 stated, a real Philosarapis[197].

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[190] The material is collected in Abd el-Mohsen el-Khachab, "*'O 'KAPAKAΛΛΟΣ' KOΣMOKPATΩP*," *JEA* 47 (1961), 119-33. The article is based on the false notion that Roman emperors made use of the mysteries of 'Asiatic cults,' especially Mithras, to achieve their political ends, i.e. despotism or autocratic rule.

[191] Two coins *RIC* vol. 4.1, no. 257a-b commemorate this visit.

[192] D.C. *Hist.* 77.23.3 and 78.7.3-4.

[193] D.C. *Hist.* 77.23.1.

[194] The fact that Sarapis had been unable to heal him on an earlier occasion is actually irrelevant, particularly since Antoninus had called upon other healer-gods as well. See D.C. *Hist.* 77.15.

[195] Her. 4.8.6-7. On Antoninus' *imitatio Alexandri HA An.* 2: "(...) egressus uero pueritiam seu patris monitis seu calliditate ingenii siue quod se Alexandro Magno Macedoni[ae] aequandum putebat."

[196] *An.* 9.10-1: "sacra Isidis Romam deportauit et templa ubique magnifice <e> idem deae fecit; sacra etiam maiore reuerentia celebrauit, quam antea celebrabantur. in quo quidem mihi mirum uidetur, quemadmodum sacra Isidis primum per hunc Romam uenisse dicantur, cum Antoninus Commodus ita ea celebrauit, ut et Anubin portaret et pausas ederet; nisi forte iste addidit celebritari non eam primus inuexit." As Her. 4.8.6-7 and Aur. Vic. *Caes.* 21.4. There might have been another one on the Caelian Hill *HA*: Treb. Poll.: Tyr. Trig. 25.4 for whose existence only an inscription vouches *SIRIS* 370 dated to the reign of Septimius Severus - M. Aurelius Antoninus (Caracalla).

[197] *IGRR* 1.1063.

5.3) Elagabalus and Severus Alexander

Antoninus Caracalla's murderer Macrinus could not hold his own against Varius Avitus Bassianus, known as Elagabalus, because the Syrian legions sided with the Emesenians. The high-priest of the sun god Elah-Gabal[198] turned Roman emperor, and named after his alleged father M. Aurelius Antoninus, Elagabalus stands out as a sad figure preoccupied with his cult rather than politics. His mother, Julia Soaemias, and grand-mother, Julia Maesa, Julia Domna's sister, apparently took care of that aspect[199], at least according to the available sources. Elagabalus' attempt to subordinate all deities to the one Elah-Gabal[200], which also meant the eventual annulment of all cults, was doomed. Again the moral issue was not decisive, but the fact that the political, economic, and ideological conditions were not allowing a change of the religious system at this point of Rome's history was all-important. Elagabalus and his mother were murdered while the powerful Julia Maesa was able to distance herself from the two and thus escape their fate. Together with her younger daughter, Julia Mamaea, mother of Severus Alexander, she successfully promoted Alexander as legitimate successor. The armies then proclaimed him emperor[201].

M. Aurelius Severus Alexander's reign was an attempt to regain the structural stability enjoyed under Septimius Severus. Although apparently refusing the name Antoninus and the epithet *magnus*, which the Senate wanted to confer upon him[202], he issued coins on which he appeared as Alexander[203]. Besides being a natural choice due to his name, the Severan Alexander could fall back on a long-standing Roman tradition of emulating Alexander the Great. He was the prime model for a successful conqueror and founder of a world

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[198] *HA Hel.* 1.5: "fuit autem Heliogabali uel Iovis uel Solis sacerdos." M. Frey *Untersuchungen zur Religion und zur Religionspolitik des Kaisers Elagabal, Historia Einzelschriften* 62 (Stuttgart, 1989), M. Pietrzykowski, "Die Religionspolitik des Kaisers Elagabal," *ANRW* II 16.3 (Berlin and New York, 1986), 1806-22, R. Turcan *Héliogabale et le sacre du soleil* (Paris, 1985), and H.R. Baldus, "Zur Aufnahme des Sol Elagabalus-Kultes in Rome, 219 n.Chr.," *Chiron* 21 (1991), 175-8.

[199] D.C. *Hist.* 79.10.

[200] *HA Hel.* 3.4-5.

[201] A. Jardé *Études critiques sur la vie et le règne de Sévère Alexandre* (Paris, 1925).

[202] *HA Alex.* 6-12.1.

[203] *HA Alex.* 25.9: "Alexandri habitu nummos plurimos figurauit."

empire. While Alexander's empire disintegrated after his death, the Romans could sincerely believe for centuries that they had procured a world empire on the principles which Vergil poetically formulated

> tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
> (hae tibi erunt artes) pacique imponere morem,
> parcere subiectis et debellare superbos[204]

and the inertia of Augustus' successors to change the governmental structure or expand the borders of the empire. Expansion only happened when conditions in a border area were such that they necessitated a Roman retaliation. The primary goal was always the military security of the controlled space.

Severus Alexander's political task was a sweeping *renouatio imperii* to regain and secure internal and external stability. This meant an inclusion of senatorial interests in imperial politics through the *consilium principis* and a streamlining of the administration of justice already begun under Antoninus Caracalla. In visual terms it meant the beautification of Rome and its temples, among them the temple of Isis and Sarapis in the *campus Martius*[205]. Success or intended success had to be visually 'readable,' and what better testimony to Rome's grandeur than the architectural renovation of the capital? The Sassanids and Alemanni, however, and all the other migrating tribes that followed after them, destroyed this dream.

6) Toward a Christian Roman Empire

Rapid successions of emperors, social and economic collapse, and the breakdown of the border defense system marked the chaotic times of the post-Severan period. These are of course only a few of the many complex reasons that caused the principate's demise. The *imperium* was disintegrating and the deteriorating visual surroundings clearly spelled failure. Restoration of the old, successful, world order involved the religious sphere. Decius (249-251) tried to mend the crumbling world order by endorsing the traditional Graeco-Roman deities. Revived priesthoods and correctly observed cultic performances as well as persecution of Christians were to restore the lost *pax deorum* and the reciprocal *pax hominum*. Diocletian (284-305), Maximian (286-305), and Galerius (305-311) followed a similar path.

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[204] *Aen.* 6.851-3.

[205] *HA Alex.* 26.8: "Isium et Serapium decenter ornauit additis signis et Deliacis et omni<no> dis mysticis."

Changing course, the latter issued an edict in 311 that made Christianity a *religio licita*. The objective was the *salus imperatoris et rei publicae*[206] and since the polytheistic system was an open construct, the inclusion of the Christian God did not pose a problem. Christians, however, could not accustom themselves to the pagan religious system. They adhered to and existed in a separate ideological context.

Galerius' final effort still fades in comparison to Constantine I's stand. Since the vision before the battle at the Milvian bridge (312)[207] and the edict of toleration of 313[208], Constantine I (306/312-37) has been considered the first imperial champion of the Christian cause. The Apollonian vision of 310 is simply ignored[209]. Forgotten is the fact that *sol inuictus*, advanced by Aurelian (270-5), was also the divine *comes* of Constantine. Eusebius, creating the emperor's Christian biography, explained that Constantine's appropriation of statues from eminent pagan sanctuaries for his new capital was an attempt to subvert the old beliefs[210]. The tendency to embrace one specific all-powerful deity should not surprise. The political realities were such that a sole ruler could promote himself and be perceived as imbued with divine powers. He could be a living god, a *comes* of a deity, or vice-regent of the Christian God.

Constantine I had laid the foundations for the Roman Christian empire. After Magnentius' unsuccessful usurpation attempt (351-3), Constantine's son Constantius II (337-61) issued anti-pagan legislation[211] and had the altar of Victory removed from the Senate during his visit to Rome in 357. His successor Julian (361-3) reversed the course. He issued legislation that allowed pagan

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[206] Lactantius *De mort. per.* 34.5: "unde iuxta hanc indulgentiam nostram debebunt deum suum orare pro salute nostra et rei publicae ac sua, ut undique uersum res publica praestetur incolumnis et securi uiuere in sedibus suis possint."

[207] Eusebius *De u. Const.* 1.28 and Lactantius *De mort.per.* 44.8.

[208] Eusebius *Hist. Ecc.* 10.5.4-8 and Lactantius *De mort. per.* 48.

[209] *Paneg. Const.* 7.21 in *Panégyriques latins*, ed. E. Galletier (Paris, 1952), vol. 2, 72.

[210] P. Chuvin *A Chronicle of the Last Pagans*, trans. B.A. Archer (Cambridge, MA and London, 1990), 23-35, M.J. Hollerich, "Myth and History in Eusebius' *De Vita Constantini: Vit. Const.* 1.12 in Its Contemporary Setting," *HThR* 82 (1989), 421-45, and Averil Cameron, "Eusebius of Caesarea and the Rethinking of History," in *Tria Corda: Scritti in onore di Arnaldo Momigliano* (Como, 1983), 71-88.

[211] *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.4-6.

rituals[212] and ordered the opening and construction of pagan temples[213]. His policies were at first tolerant. Exiled bishops were allowed to return[214]. The clock, however, could not be turned back. Julian's efforts to introduce his religious model (a combination of mystic neo-Platonism, worship of the sun and Magna Mater, and Mithraism) patterned along Christian hierarchical lines did not catch on. Religious tensions erupted among Christians[215] and Julian's edict on education[216] sent further ripples of anxiety through Christian communities. The emperor's death on campaign against the Persians in 363 ended the attempt at a reactionary *renouatio imperii*.

Paganism was marginalized, but hardly dead. Valentinian (364-75) decreed toleration[217]. The Arian Valens, Valentinian's brother, in charge of the Eastern part of the empire, followed the same path. Astrology, however, did not fare well with the two[218]. Knowledge of the future was a guarded property of emperors and was decreed inaccessable for the general public. Speculation about the future had the potential of upsetting the social and political equilibrium. The reactions against publicly practicing astrologers, prophets, and diviners was not any different in the early Principate as in the Byzantine period of the Comneni[219].

Gratian (375-83), one of Valentinian's sons and successor to the Western half of the empire, moved from toleration to discontinuation of pagan practices. In 382, he abolished the title *pontifex maximus* from the imperial titulature, had the altar and the *imago* of Victory in the senate-house in Rome removed, suspended pension payments to pagan priests, and refused to fill vacant sacerdotal positions[220]. When Magnus Maximus usurped the throne and had Gratian assassinated, pagan senators in Rome saw a possibility of reversing the course. Theodosius, in charge of the Eastern part of the empire,

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[212] Ammianus 22.5.2.

[213] Ammianus 22.5.2 and *Cod. Theod.* 15.1.3.

[214] Ammianus 22.5.3.

[215] Sozomen *Hist. ecc.* 5.5.2 and Socrates *Hist. ecc.* 3.13.

[216] *Cod. Theod.* 13.3.5, Ammianus 22.10.7, and Julian *Ep.* 46.

[217] *Cod. Theod.* 9.16.9. J. Rougé, "Valentinien et la religion: 364-365," *Ktèma* 12 (1987), 285-97.

[218] *Cod. Theod.* 9.16.8. For a short survey and relevant bibliography see Chuvin (1990), 49-53.

[219] MacMullen (1967), 128-162. On *auspicium* see F. Heim, "Les auspices publics de Constantin à Théodose," *Ktèma* 13 (1988), 41-53.

[220] Zosimus *Hist.* 4.36.9 and Symm. *Rel.* 3.4.

recognized Maximus as Augustus of Britain, Gaul, and Spain from 384-87, while the thirteen year old brother of Gratian, Valentinian II, oversaw Italy, Illyricum, Macedonia, and Dacia with the help of his mother. In 388, Theodosius crushed Maximus, who had attempted to seize control over Italy at Aquileia.

It was from 384 to 391, when Theodosius did not solely rule over both halves of the empire, that men like Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, Nicomachus Flavianus, and Q. Aurelius Symmachus, who held leading political positions, saw a chance of reviving the ancestral cults[221]. Valentinian II's death in Gaul in 391 and Eugenius' subsequent usurpation (392-4) gave even further impulse to attempts at a restoration. Imperial legislation and ambitious local bishops, however, thwarted the revival[222]. In uniting the empire and concentrating as much power as possible in his hands, Theodosius relied in the end on Christians rather than reactionary pagans. Maybe personal conviction and political reality finally went hand in hand.

Powerful Christians argued successfully against pagan practices. St. Ambrose and Prudentius, for example, took on Symmachus, who in his third *Relatio* urged the continuance of ancestral worship[223]. Not one of these writers emphasizes Isis, who is still considered one of the deities that could have jeopardized the spread of Christianity. Isis and Sarapis, however, hardly ever appear in Christian writings as the detractors 'par excellence,' who lead their faithful astray with false doctrines and pompous but empty rituals. The two are usually lumped together and caricatured with various other deities of the Graeco-Roman pantheon[224]. There are also literary topoi to contend

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[221] H. Bloch, "A New Document of the Last Pagan Revival in the West, 393-394 A.D.," *HThR* 38 (1945), 199-244 (a shorter version also in *The Conflict Between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. A. Momigliano (Oxford, 1963), 193-218), A. Cameron, "The Roman Friends of Ammianus," *JRS* 24 (1964), 14-28, and R. Klein *Symmachus. Eine tragische Gestalt des ausgehenden Heidentums* (Darmstadt, 1971) and *Der Streit um den Victoriaaltar* (Darmstadt, 1973).

[222] *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.10-2. For a more detailed study see J. Wytzes *Der letzte Kampf des Heidentums in Rom, EPRO* 56 (Leiden, 1977).

[223] J. Matthews, "Symmachus and the Oriental Cults," *JRS* 63 (1973), 175-95.

[224] As Prudentius *c. Symm.* 622-631: "ipse magistratum tibi consulis, ipse tribunal | contulit auratumque togae donauit amictum, | cuius religio tibi displicet, o pereuntum | adsertor diuum, solus qui restituendos | Uulcani Martisque dolos Uenerisque peroras | Saturnique senis lapides Phoebique furores, | Iliacae matris Megalesia, Bacchica Nysi, | Isidis amissum semper plangentis Osirim | mimica riden-

with[225]; Valerius Maximus' M. Volusius and Suetonius' Domitian both escaped henchmen by disguising themselves as Isiacs, and Juvenal's demented, animal and vegetable worshipping Egyptians. Christian polemics simply continued the literary tradition. In the realm of ideology, the myth and cosmology of Isis became one of the stepping stones leading toward the true *soter* and *cosmocrator*[226]. The need to discuss and explain pagan world views, and thus inadvertently integrate them, is clear. The world and Rome effectively existed before the appearance of Christ. And, tradition could not be forsaken. Success came when traditional structures, depleted of their original content, would be transferred into a Christian framework[227].

Uota publica coinage catalogued and analyzed by A. Alföldi seems to suggest that the leading Roman pagans employed images of Egyptian deities as propaganda devices[228]. Starting with Diocletian, these coins, for the most part brass, occasionally bronze, were systematically issued. Alföldi discerned two series: those with imperial busts and those with Isis, Sarapis, Horus, Anubis, the personified Nile, or the sphinx on the obverse. The latter series he labled 'anonymous' and connected them with Rome's pagan 'party.' Unlike the coins with a depiction of an emperor (in Alföldi's study Valentinian II is the last emperor depicted and named on the obverse), these 'anonymous' issues are labled pseudo-money[229] and thought to function as pagan propaganda. Even if the cult of Isis is considered, next to that of Magna Mater, most dangerous to Christianity[230], which it was not, these coins do not point to immediate pagan propaganda.

The personified Nile and the sphinx do not appear to be especially powerful pagan propaganda symbols. In the first instance they

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daque suis sollemnia caluis, | et quascumque solent Capitolia claudere laruas."

[225] Alföldi (1937), 44-6.

[226] A good example for this is Eusebius' *Εὐαγγελικὴ προπαρασκευή*.

[227] On Isis and Mary see G. Paterson Corrington, "The Milk of Salvation: Redemtion by the Mother in Late Antiquity and Early Christianity," *HThR* 82 (1989), 393-420. V. Tran tam Tinh *Isis lactans. Corpus des monuments gréco-romains d'Isis allaitant Harpocrate, EPRO* 37 (Leiden, 1971).

[228] A. Alföldi, "A Festival of Isis in Rome under the Christian Emperors of the Fourth Century," *Dissertationes Pannonicae*, Ser. II, fasc. 7 (Budapest, 1937), 5-95 and "Die Alexandrinischen Götter und die Vota Publica am Jahresbeginn," *JAC* 8-9 (1965-6), 53-87.

[229] Alföldi (1937), 17.

[230] Alföldi (1937), 40.

symbolize Egypt, the breadbasket of the empire. They signify religion only by extension. And, there is Anubis - a curious choice. The jackal-headed deity easily attracted contempt and detrimental invectives. The elegaic and Juvenalesque portrayal of Egyptians and demi-monde initiates was a powerful argument against paganism in Christian apologetic literature and Saints' Lives[231]. Would leading pagans have chosen such an easy target as signifier of their struggle for survival? It is more likely that they kept with an established tradition. Christian emperors apparently did not mind this early January festival during which participants would voice their loyalty to the emperor and wish for his *salus* and that of the empire. In return they would receive *uota publica* coins, which featured portraits of *christissimi imperatores* on the obverse up to Valentinian II's reign. The depicted deities on the reverse, and later on the obverse, might have had religious meanings for some; for others they might have been nothing more than artistic abstractions of Egypt. Cereal producing Egypt was for Christians and pagans alike an indispensable guarantor of the well-being of the empire. In the realm of symbols, Egypt and its deities signified plenty and stability. In his third *Relatio* Symmachus mentions famine and links it with neglect of ancestral religion[232]. While the northern provinces produced more than usual, as St. Ambrose gleefully pointed out[233], Spain's, North Africa's, and Egypt's crops failed. Symmachus' causal link was undermined. Political, social, and economic disintegration had no longer anything to do with neglect of pagan rites. Order and the empire's prosperity depended on the elimination of pagan cults and the subordination of the state to the Christian church.

The disappearance of the imperial portrait on the obverse signals a most important change. As the prospect of religious toleration evaporated so the *salus rei publicae* could no longer be linked with the emperor. If we seek pagan 'propaganda,' or better defiance, it can only be found in this action during the time of greatest anxiety and political weakness. By changing the design, and thus making a statement, pagans broke with tradition. Rome's (glorious pagan) past could no longer be associated with a Christian emperor. Brass and

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[231] As in the Acta S. Apolloni. The saint's martyrdom occurred around the time of Commodus.

[232] 16: "sacrilegio annus exaruit. Necesse enim fuit perire omnibus, quod religionibus negabatur."

[233] *Ep.* 18.21. H.P. Kohns *Versorgungskrisen und Hungerrevolten im spätantiken Rom* (Bonn, 1961).

bronze contorniates were another kind of *pseudo-moneta*. They were distributed around New Year's as well. These tokens had a larger spectrum of designs and continued to be struck until circa the last quarter of the fifth century CE[234]. They featured, for example, charioteers, mythological scenes, pagan deities (among them Sarapis), Alexander the Great, Nero, and famous Graeco-Roman writers and thinkers. Even in an ever-increasingly Christian world, most of these representations could have been pagan 'propaganda' as well as simple allusions to an earlier part of the history of the *imperium Romanum*. As the intellectual landscape transformed, symbols changed their meaning or were replaced. The production and the distribution of the *uota publica* coins and the contorniates eventually ceased, but the festival during which they were distributed continued. The populace received other tokens of appreciation.

The actions of Theophilus of Alexandria, like St. Ambrose, who manipulated Gratian and humbled Theodosius, an ambitious and powerful prelate, shaped the future of the empire. The destruction of the Alexandrian Sarapeum under his direction marks the physical implementation of Theodosius' edict against pagan cults[235] and the end of religious toleration. Before this edict, in 389, Theophilus had ordered the Sarapeum at Menouthis, approximately eleven miles northeast of Alexandria, destroyed and a church honoring the Evangelists constructed in its place. The neighboring temple of Isis Medica was left untouched. In comparison to Sarapis the healing Isis did not comprise political symbolism that needed to be smothered at this time. The destruction of the Menouthian Sarapeum can be interpreted as a symbolic action in a controlled and controllable environment against the traditional, pagan view of the emperor and his position as well as an attempt to divest emperor and emperorship of its original pagan context. At a time Theodosius had to ward of an usurper, the stakes of leading an attack against the Sarapeum in Alexandria, which could toss the largest city in the east and the whole empire into chaos, could have seemed to high.

Two years later, Theophilus felt confident enough to order the great Sarapeum in Alexandria destroyed[236]. The patriarch also

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[234] A. and E. Alföldi *Die Kontorniat-Medaillons, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Antike Münzen und geschnittene Steine*, vol. 6 (Berlin and New York, 1990).

[235] *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.10.

[236] Theodoret *Ecc. Hist.* 22 (Migne *PG* 80) furnishes the most vivid description.

appropriated the Nile-gauge and with it the power over the life-giving Nile[237]. Of course, the Christian God did not fail in providing the same continuity as the pharaonic and Ptolemaic gods had before. The Sarapiana, the smaller Alexandrian library which was part of the greater temple structure, does not seem to have been destroyed in the attack, and pagans who, like Hypatia, were associated with the Alexandrian libraries, not only remained in Alexandria, but kept on working. Hypatia was gruesomely murdered in Cyril's early patriarchate. Her death sealed the fate of pagan Alexandrian Neoplatonism and scientific development in general[238]. Notably though, Christian Neoplatonism originated with her student Synesius, bishop of Cyrene[239]. In some ways Hypatia symbolizes the transition from the pagan to the Christian world, which, although it tried, could never completely disentangle itself from its pagan past. Romans had conquered the world because God had ordained that Rome should rule the civilized world. Prudentius, styled the Christian Vergil, put this new political ideology in verse:

> en ades, Omnipotens, concordibus influe terris:
> iam mundus te, Christe, capit, quem congrege nexu
> pax et Roma tenent. capita haec et culmina rerum
> esse iubes, nec Roma tibi sine pace probatur
> et pax ut placeat facit excellentia Romae[240].

The glory of old, however, passed to the New Rome, Constantine's foundation: Constantinople and homage to the *ciuitas Dei*.

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[237] The ceremony of gauging the Nile waters, purged of pagan elements, remained 'structurally' the same. For a description see D. Bonneau *La crue du Nil divinité égyptienne, Études et Commentaires* 52, (Paris, 1964), 438-9.

[238] For more detail see S.A. Takács, "The Magic of Isis Replaced or Cyril of Alexandria's Attempt at Redirecting Religious Devotion," *Poikila Byzantina Varia* 5 (in press) and "Hypatia's Murder - The Sacrifice of a Virgin and Its Implications," in *Crisis of Cultures and the Birth of Faith*, ed. K.B. Free (in press).

[239] J. Bregman *Synesius of Cyrene, Philosopher-Bishop* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1982) and H.I. Marrou, "Synesius of Cyrene and Alexandrian Neoplatonism," ed. A. Momigliano, *The Conflict Between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1963), 126-50.

[240] Prudentius *c. Symm.* 2. 634-8.

7) Conclusion

The integration of Isis and Sarapis and their cult began with the political integration of the eastern Mediterranean. Their inclusion among the *sacra publica* and the assigning of a public temple structure in the mid-first century CE denoted official sanction and their recognition as members of the Roman polytheistic pantheon. Octavian Augustus, Agrippa, and Tiberius took steps against the cult of Isis and Sarapis in times when Rome's social and authority structure could be challenged. The possibility, however, of labeling the cult of Isis and Sarapis a *superstitio*, thus singling it out, vanished with the consolidation of the Augustan political construct and the recognition of Egypt not as an antagonistic force but as an integral, although special, part of the *imperium*. The autocratic Gaius (Caligula) and Nero advanced the duplication of the Ptolemaic ruler ideology and the *princeps'* extraordinary political position propelled him and his family into the intermediate sphere between the divine and the terrestrial.

Alexandria, and subsequently the city's main deities, played an important part in Vespasian's political ascent. While Vespasian and Titus showed their reverence toward the Alexandrian gods and Egypt by staying in the temple of Isis in the *campus Martius* on their return to Rome, Domitian expressed his *pietas* through the refurbishing of temples of Isis in and around Rome. Thus Isis and Sarapis had acquired the status of imperial deities.

The philhellene Hadrian expressed his personal interest in Egypt and his understanding of the importance of Alexandria in the transmission of the Greek intellectual heritage with the construction of his villa, which was partially a copy of the Egyptian Canopis. The emperor's interest found itself replicated among the populace. Egyptian and Egyptianizing art objects became increasingly fashionable. In order to distinguish between 'art collectors' and cult initiates, it might be best to consider only cultic objects, as described in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, as decisive. A cult object alone, however, does not indicate the existence of a temple structure, in which people could be initiated into the mysteries, in that area. The possibility of initiation, which necessitated the presence of a high priest and a cultic congregation, distinguished a 'public' from a 'private' sanctuary.

Arnouphis, the Egyptian *magus* in Marcus Aurelius' entourage, brought about the 'miracle' that changed the battle against the Quadi

in favor of the Romans. As a result of this, leading military men stationed in the Danubian provinces put up inscriptions in the name of Isis and/or Sarapis and the well-being of the emperor. These inscriptions should not be mistaken for statements of cult initiates. They were simply public acknowledgements of the power of these two deities. In addition, the presence of a *magus* in the retinue of the philosopher-emperor nicely demonstrates the confidence and trust the Romans had in what they judged to be ancient, and therefore powerful, sacred knowledge. The privilege of the emperor was to have such knowledge at his disposal.

Commodus seems to have been initiated in the cult of Isis and seems to have held one of the lower priesthoods. The depiction of him as Horus situated between a bull and a cow, however, has to be seen more as an artistic rendering of the Egyptian myth of succession and dynastic rule than an expression of cultic adherence. The same applies to the various coin issues with representations of Isis and Sarapis. They were not symbolic expressions of Commodus' cultic interests but public acknowledgements of the role these two gods played in the food supply chain. Their appeasement guaranteed in part the political stability of Rome and subsequently that of the whole empire.

After Commodus' murder and four years of civil war, Septimius Severus emerged as the new emperor. In the process of restoring the empire to its former glory, Septimius visited Alexandria, aware of the city's and the country's economic importance for the whole of the empire. Beyond this, however, Septimius placed himself in the tradition of the Ptolemies and Alexander the Great. Thus, he enhanced his claim to be the rightful heir to the empire's highest political position, in essence to be a true *diui filius*. The artistic portrayal of Septimius Severus as Sarapis should be seen in this context and not as a sign of Septimius' African heritage.

Antoninus Caracalla's stay in Alexandria essentially served the same purpose. The construction of a temple of Sarapis on the Quirinal, which in size rivaled that of the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, stands as an architectural monument for the imperial recognition of the Ptolemaic creation independent of its original cultic context as a deity closely connected with the emperor and the *domus Augusta*. The temple also symbolizes the completion of an integration process that had begun with Vespasian's political employment of Sarapis. Together with the internal dynamic of Augustus' political creation that each subsequent emperor could place himself with greater facility into the intermediate sphere between the divine

and human, the Ptolemaic form of the Pharaonic dynastic ideology found itself replicated.

Political chaos marked the time after Alexander Severus' murder. While some emperors tried to halt the state's disintegration by 'scapegoating' Christians, others built on religious toleration. Pagans stressed that Rome had received universal *imperium* because its inhabitants had military excellence, readily integrated the gods of the conquered, and properly and timely performed religious rituals[241]. Christian polemics did not specifically single out Isis or Sarapis nor did pagans solely base their argumentation on these deities. A description of an Isiac with a shaven head is supposed to stress the grotesque, the uncivilized, i.e. un-Roman, in contrast to the Christian initiate who simply wore a white robe after baptism and carried his initiation inwardly. Inscriptions show that Roman senators involved in the 'last pagan revival' were more likely traditional *pontifices* and *augures* than Isiacs[242]. Isis and Sarapis were significant components of the Roman religious and mental landscape, but they were not the single most important thread in the fabric.

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[241] Minucius Felix *Oct.* 6.1-3.

[242] Bloch (1945), 242-4 & list, recorded inscriptions of nineteen men and four women, one unknown, involved in this struggle. Four of whom (two women and two men) had Isiac affiliation. Ulpius Egnatius Faventinus and Caecinia Lolliana were *sacerdotes*, C. Rufius Volusianus a *profeta*, and Fabia Aconia Paulina an *Isiaea*. Vettius Agorius Praetextatus was a *neocorus Iouis magni Sarapidis*. In contrast, fourteen were associated with Magna Mater and Attis and nine men with (*deus inuictus Sol*) Mithras.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RHINE PROVINCES

Germania superior and inferior

1) Short Historical Survey

Caesar's campaigns in Gaul, apart from population displacements and decimations, resulted in a transfer of the Roman border to the Rhine (*Rhenus*). Augustus tried to extend the German frontier from the Rhine to the Elbe (*Albus*) but Drusus' death in 9 BCE temporarily stopped the advance. Then Augustus sent Tiberius to secure Germania for Rome and in 4 CE the area between the Rhine, the Elbe, the North Sea and the European highlands (Erzgebirge) was thought a province in the phase of occupation[1]. Arminius' devastating strike against the Romans in 9 CE brought about the elimination of three legions, six auxiliary cohorts, and three *alae* under the command of P. Quinctilius Varus[2]. It depleted Roman combat effectiveness but did not break the Roman willingness to venture further into the area west of the Rhine.

Drusus' son Germanicus set out against the various Germanic tribes in 14 and 15 CE. Again, Arminius inflicted heavy losses on the Romans. Germanicus' offensive in 16 CE was more successful. He defeated his German nemesis, Arminius, twice, but the Roman fleet, with which the Roman troops were transported from the Lower Rhine to the operational area, suffered considerable storm damage on its return. At this point, the emperor Tiberius recalled Germanicus, stopped the campaign and with it, the Augustan policy of conquest[3]. Germanicus received a triumph (the Roman equivalent of declaring victory and pulling out) and was sent to take care of the eastern provinces for which he was granted an *imperium maius*.

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[1] Vell. Pat. 2.94.4: "(...) formam paene stipendiae prouinciae."

[2] Tacitus described the location *haud procul Teutoburgiensi saltu*. Th. Mommsen deduced from repeated coin finds that the Niewedder Depression, just north of Osnabrück, located between the Kalkrieser Mountain and the so-called Great Moor, a natural bottle neck, had been the place of the devastating battle. The newest archaeological excavations now substantiate Mommsen's hypothesis.

[3] K. Christ *Drusus und Germanikus. Der Eintritt der Römer in Germanien* (Paderborn, 1956).

The Roman occupational armies, however, were not withdrawn. The two military spheres, the Lower Rhine, with military headquarters in Vetera (Xanten), later moved to the *oppidum Ubiorum* (Cologne)[4], and the Upper Rhine, with the main base in Mogontiacum (Mainz), naturally formed the two *prouinciae*. The two military commanders, with four legions each, governed the areas of Germania inferior and superior as *legati Augusti pro praetore exercitus* while the financial administration of the two military provinces was assigned to the *procurator* of Belgica.

The uprising of the *Bataui* under the leadership of Civilis in 69-70 highlighted the weakness of the Lower Rhine *limes*. Vespasian militarily reorgnized the Lower and the Upper Rhine area. He moved the *legio II adiutrix*, later replaced by the *legio X gemina*, into the area of Nijmegen, the center of the uprising. He placed the *legio XXII primigenia* in Vetera, the *legio VI uictrix* in Neuss, the *legio XXI rapax* in Bonna (Bonn), and the *legio I adiutrix* and *XIV gemina* in Mogontiacum. Vespasian replaced most of the auxiliaries and added new ones. There were about six *alae* and twenty-six *cohortes* in addition to the four legions in the Lower Rhine area[5].

The annexation of the *Agri Decumates*[6] and the region around the Taunus Mountain[7] allowed the construction of a road between the Upper Rhine and Upper Danube. There was reconstruction of the destroyed *castella* and construction of new ones as in Nida (Frankfurt-Heddernheim) and the row of auxiliary *castella* along the Lower Neckar. Under Domitian's administration control of the provinces Germania superior and inferior[8] was given to *legati Augusti pro*

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[4] Under Claudius the *oppidum* advanced to *colonia* and was renamed *colonia Claudia ara Augusta Agrippinensium*.

[5] Data from H. von Petrikovits *Die Rheinlande in römischer Zeit* (Düsseldorf, 1980). On auxiliary stationed in Germania inferior see G. Alföldy *Die Hilfstruppen der römischen Provinz Germania inferior, Epigraphische Studien* 6 (Düsseldorf, 1968).

[6] Tac. *Germ.* 29. Originally inhabited by *Heluetii* and later *Suebi*, the migration of a Macromannic tribe under the leadership of Maroboduus around 9 CE destroyed the cohesive tribal units. E. Hesselmayer, "Was ist und was heisst Dekumatland," *Klio* 24 (1931), 1-37.

[7] This area included the Black Forest, the Neckar basin and the Swabian Alb.

[8] Ch.B. Rüger *Germania inferior. Untersuchungen zur Territorial- und Verwaltungsgeschichte Niedergermaniens in der Prinzipatszeit, Beiheft der Bonner Jahrbücher* 30 (Köln and Graz, 1968).

praetore without military emphasis[9]. The financial administration, however, remained linked to Belgica but now under a *procurator prouinciae Belgicae et utriusque Germaniae*. Trajan reduced the legions present in the two provinces to four, a sign that Roman Germany had successfully been pacified and, in time, would allow strategic concentration on the eastern borders. His successors, Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, reorganized and advanced the *limes* eastward[10].

The loss of territory and increasing influx of Germanic tribes in the late third century necessitated a change in administrative structure. Diocletian created three German provinces, Germania inferior renamed *secunda*, Germania superior with the new label *prima*, and *maxima Sequanorum*. These three organizational units were governed through the diocese of the Gauls and the *praefectus praetorii Galliarum* residing in Augusta Treverorum (Trier). But even these smaller administrative and military units could not withstand the continuous barbaric onslaught.

2) Inscriptions

2.1) Germania superior

The evidence regarding Isis and Sarapis from the province Germania superior is sparse. Besides statuettes, terra cotta figurines, and cult objects such as *sistra*, three inscriptions have made their way into Vidman's collection[11]. The most informative of the three is the dedicatory inscription from Aquae Helvetiorum (Baden, Switzerland).

> Text:
> Deae Isidi templum a solo| L. Annusius Magianus| de suo posuit uik(anis) Aquensib(us)| ad cuius templi ornamenta|[5] Alpinia Alpinula coniunx| et Peregrina fil(ia) (denarios) C dede|runt l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) uicanorum[12]

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[9] E. Stein *Die kaiserlichen Beamten und Truppenkörper im römischen Deutschland unter dem Prinzipat* (Wien, 1932) and E. Ritterling *Fasti des römischen Deutschland under dem Prinzipat* (Wien, 1932).

[10] Ch.-M. Tenes, "Die Provincia Germania superior," *ANRW* II 5.2 (Berlin and New York, 1976), 721-1260 discusses the *limes* on pp. 764-73.

[11] *SIRIS* 714-6.

[12] *SIRIS* 714 = *CIL* XIII 5233.

Translation:
Annusius Magianus has built on his own and with his own money this temple for the goddess Isis among the Aquensian villagers on a location given by the decree of the villagers while his wife Alpinia Alpinula and his daughter Peregrina gave a hundred denarii for the embellishment of this temple

Aquae Helvetiorum, as its name suggests, possessed thermal springs. The excavations have shown that the Roman bath complex had an area of at least 55m x 37m, which is considered spacious[13]. This size suggests that the Aquensians were affluent and that the baths had, beyond the maintenance of a Roman standard of cleanliness, an additional medical purpose. The discovery of a building complex approximately 300m west of the baths, which yielded, in addition to a large number of mural painting remains, a large number of medical instruments, seems to support this notion[14]. And since Isis, just like Sarapis, had healing functions, it is not surprising that an affluent individual aware of this fact and guided by his personal conviction would want to build a temple for her.

The initial reason for Annusius Magianus' interest in Isis remains unknown. The root of his *cognomen* might hint at 'magical' knowledge, but like any other attempt to pinpoint motivation this cannot be more than pure speculation. Certain conditions that facilitated the construction of a temple of Isis and, therefore, the public introduction of Isis can, however, be enumerated. The presence of a river, the Limmat, which dominated the city's topography, together with a Celtic undercurrent, applicable not only to Annusius Magianus, his wife, and their daughter but also to the community of Aquae, created the basic topographical and ideological environment which would allow the integration of the cult of Isis and Sarapis. Water, which played a significant part in the cult of Isis and Sarapis, also had an important place in the Celtic *Gedankenwelt* as the Isis-Noreia sanctuaries on Celtic 'holy mountains' in Noricum emphasize[15]. Assigned to the celestial as well as to the terrestrial sphere, water was thought to be magical. Its magic ranged from bringing forth the essential crops to healing various bodily ailments. While Annusius

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[13] W. Drack and R. Fellmann *Die Römer in der Schweiz* (Stuttgart and Jona SG, 1988), 352 and H.W. Doppler *Der römische Vicus Aquae Helveticae Baden, Archäologischer Führer der Schweiz* 8 (Baden, 1976), 12-6.

[14] Drack & Fellmann (1988), 349.

[15] R.A. Wild *Water in the Cultic Worship of Isis and Sarapis, EPRO* 87 (Leiden, 1981) and Chapter 5.

Magianus' economic position in the Aquensian community must have been a decisive factor in the public allocation of village-owned property (although Alpina and Peregrina's contribution seems modest), the council of the Aquensians had to be well-disposed toward Isis as well. The construction of a temple on publicly owned land could only take place when the deity for whom the temple was built was not perceived as impeding the *pax deorum* and, consequently, the *pax hominum*. The inscription, assigned to the second or third century CE, recording the construction of the temple falls into a period in which the cult of Isis was not only well established as a *sacrum publicum* but had also received an additional impetus through the accomplishment of the priest Arnouphis and imperial interest in the two deities for purposes of dynastic explication and sociopolitical and socioeconomic stability.

The *uicus* and its inhabitants initially profited financially from the closeness of Vindonissa (Windisch), located about 10km west of Aquae, the home base of the *legio XIII*, then the *legio XXI rapax*, and finally the *legio XI Claudia pia fidelis* from Vespasian's time until the end of the first century. The presence of a legion meant Romanization and the binding of an area to the sociopolitical and economic center, but not necessarily the total economic dependence of an area's populace on the military. When the east became the focal point of Rome's interest, the legionary camp in Vindonissa was dissolved. Archaeological evidence suggests that the city's economic flowering occurred in the late first and the second century CE, i.e. a time after the dissolution of the legionary camp. The Romanized civil population, the economic infrastructure, and with them the incorporation into the social, political and economic network of the *imperium Romanum*, remained. Opposite of Aquae Helvetiorum lay Turicum (Zürich) and Vitudurum (Winterthur). From there roads led to Brigantium (Bregenz) and the various mountain passes in Raetia, the gateways to Italy and the social, political, and economic center of the empire, Rome.

The sandstone altar from Stockstadt, a *statio beneficiariorum*, has been included for its representation of Isis and Sarapis, between them a *caduceus*, placed next to Jupiter. This is the pictoral analogy of the textual *Ioui optimo maximo conseruatori, ceteris dis deabusque*. Governors chose *beneficiarii* to supervise the provincial road traffic at points of intersection. At the end of their term, these employees of the provincial administration put up votive altars with inscriptions commemorating their tenure. In these inscriptions *Iuppiter optimus*

maximus, Rome's major god, figured as the most often addressed deity[16].

Text:
I(oui) o(ptimo) m(aximo) | conserua[t]ori | ceteris dis dea | busque e[t] |[5] genio Iunii Uictori | ni c(on)s(ularis) | C. Secionius | Senilis b(ene)f(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis) | u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[17]

Translation:
Jupiter the best and greatest and all the other savior gods and goddesses and the *genius* of the consular legate Junius Victorinus, the consular *beneficiarius* C. Secionius Senilis gladly and deservedly fulfilled his promise

While the dedicator C. Secionius Senilis remains an enigma, a little more is known about Junius Victorinus. He was, as an inscription from Kirk-Andrews upon Eden (Britain) reveals[18], a successful legate of the *legio VI uictrix pia fidelis*. Sometime in the second to the third century he was consul[19] and then took up the office of governor of Germania superior. The iconographic inclusion of Isis and Sarapis on this altar nicely reflects the *Zeitgeist*. Junius Victorinus' military and political career, and, by extension, the career of Secionius Senilis, fell into the time of the Severan dynasty when Sarapis in particular was employed for political purposes.

The final inscription has been detected on the handle of a bronze *sistrum*.

Text:
L. Ulen . | sistru | posit | aerari(us?)[20]

Translation:
The paymaster L. Ulen(...) has placed this *sistrum*

This part of a cult object, found in the *uicus* Nida (Frankfurt-Heddernheim), does not necessarily indicate the existence of an

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[16] A. von Domaszewski, "Die Beneficiarierposten und die römischen Strassennetze," *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst* 21 (1902), 158-211.

[17] *SIRIS* 715 = *CIL* XIII 6638.

[18] *CIL* VII 940.

[19] PIR IV^2, 359 and A. Degrassi *I fasti consolari dell'imperio Romano dal 30 a.C. al 613 d. C.* (Rome, 1952), 198.

[20] *SIRIS* 716 = *CIL* XIII 7378. The misspelled *sistru* for *sistrum* and *posit* for *posuit* reproduce vulgar Latin. For more detailed explanations see L.R. Palmer *The Latin Language* (London, 1961) and V. Väänänen *Introduction au Latin vulgaire* (Paris, 1967).

Iseum in the civilian area around the *castellum*. First, the paymaster, even if he were a cult initiate, could have placed his present in a temple of a goddess akin to Isis or in a private shrine. Second, considering the location and exclusively military purpose of Nida, it seems a highly unlikely place for an *Iseum*, since it required, besides a permanent cultic staff and a congregation financially able to maintain the structure, an economic and ideological substratum which this *limes* location simply could not provide.

2.1.1) Summary

The meagre yield of inscriptions from Germania superior should not surprise on two accounts. First, the overall epigraphical output was, in comparison to other provinces, low. Second, perishable materials could have been used, and third, the Romanized inhabitants mentioned the traditional Roman gods more readily than even the indigenous deities. The Roman presence gave the impulse to depict one's deities and put up dedications with their name, but in essence it was nothing more than the expression of one's adaptation to the Roman cultural system and the integration of one's gods into the Roman religious system. The most striking fact, however, is the absence of any relevant epigraphical evidence from the provincial capital Mogontiacum (Mainz)[21]. Even the various art objects depicting Egyptian deities that have been found in and around Mainz[22] do not prove the existence of a public cult association which would require the existence of an *Iseum*. They can, however, be evidence of personal devotion exercised in private, or simply signs of an artistic interest in Egyptian or Egyptianizing art objects.

While Romanization and urbanization made the propagation of the cult of Isis and Sarapis possible, personal interest and ideology as well as local conditions, as for example the worship of indigenous deities with similar characteristics, or, as in the case of Aquae Helvetiorum, the existence of thermal springs with medicinal properties and the ever present river Limmat rising and falling in accordance with the seasons, were decisive undercurrents that could enable and facilitate an introduction of Isis and Sarapis and the construction of a temple.

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[21] D. Baatz, "Die Topographie des römischen Mainz," in *Germania Romana I: Römerstädte in Deutschland, Gymansium* Beiheft 1 (Heidelberg, 1960), 51-8.

[22] G. Grimm *Die Zeugnisse ägyptischer Religion und Kunstelemente im römischen Deutschland, EPRO* 12 (Leiden, 1969), nos. 92-106.

2.2) Germania inferior

In contrast to Germania superior stands Germania inferior. From its provincial capital, *colonia Claudia Ara Augusta Agrippinensium* (Cologne), come nine of the ten relevant inscriptions from the province. The tenth has been found in *forum Hadriani* (Voorburg). The dedicator of this votive inscription was a certain L. Lucretius Faustinianus, a *centurio* of the *legio I Minerua pia felix*. Since the permanent home of this legion was *Bonna* (Bonn), Faustinianus might have placed his dedication while on military campaign.

> Text:
> I(oui) o(ptimo) m(aximo) Sarapi| Isidi frugifer<ae>| Caelesti Fortun(ae)| Bono Euento|[5] Felicitati Lari| uiali e[t] Genio| loci L. Lucretius| Pal(atina) Faustinian(us)| (centurio) leg(ionis) I M(ineruiae) p(iae) <f(elicis)> pro se|[10] suis<que> r. u(otum) l(ibens) consac(rauit)[23]
>
> Translation:
> To Jupiter the best and greatest, Sarapis, Isis the fruit bringer, the celestial Fortune, Good Event, Felicity, the *Lar* of the road, and the local *genius*, L. Lucretius Faustinianus belonging to the tribe Palatina, *centurio* of the *legio I Minerua pia felix* gladly consecrated this for himself and his family (fulfilling) a promise

This votive inscription follows in essence the pattern of inscriptions put up by *beneficiarii*. Sarapis follows Rome's supreme deity while an unspecific local *genius* concludes the enumeration. This inscription deviates from the pattern insofar as Isis, Fortuna and related deified concepts were added to them. Although the epithet *frugifera* might be considered more than appropriate for Isis, it occurs only once more in an inscription; namely, on a marble disk found in the church of Santa Maria in Rome[24], i.e. in the general vicinity of the *Iseum Campense*.

The datable inscriptions from *colonia Agrippinensis* fall in the last part of the second century. One inscription, together with other relevant material,[25] allows the inference that a cult association of Isis and Sarapis had been established in Cologne. These associates most likely met in a cult-specific temple, but excavations have not

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[23] *SIRIS* 724 = *CIL* XIII 1337*. The meaning of the singular letter *r* remains unclear. Vidman, following A. Riese *Das rheinische Germanien in den antiken Inschriften* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1914), n. 553, judged the inscription authentic.

[24] *SIRIS* 379 = *CIL* VI 351.

[25] See "Katalog" in Grimm (1969).

yet brought such a structure to light. The introduction of the cult of Isis and Sarapis happened probably not before the mid-second century as the datable material suggests. This is supported by the fact that dedications in the name of Isis and/or Sarapis and the introduction of the cult in the Rhine and Danubian provinces took place predominantly during this period. The reason rests embedded in the continuous Romanization process whose most decisive consequence was the successful ideological binding of the periphery to the center. What was established in Rome and deliberately or unintentionally propagated by an emperor could not help but find its way to the provinces. The personal interest of some emperors in the two deities spurred an interest among the inhabitants of the empire and paved the way for the reception of Isis and Sarapis into their personal pantheon.

Among the nine inscriptions from Cologne, seven mention Isis and two Sarapis. Of the latter two, the dedicatory inscription of Dextrina Justa on white marble is most telling. The piece was found near the cathedral, which is directly south of the northern side of the Roman *murus*, in other words, on the northeastern outskirts of the residential district between the Roman north gate and the harbor entrance[26].

> Text:
> Soli Serapi | cum sua cline | in h(onorem) d(omus) d(iuinae) | Dextrinia Iusta | [5] L. Dextrini Iusti | [f]ilia Agripp(inensis) d(ono) dedit[27]
>
> Translation:
> To Sol Serapis with his dining association in honor of the divine house, Dextrina Justa, a native of Cologne, the daughter of L. Dextrinus Justus gave this as a present

Sol and Sarapis are joined in Justa's dedication. The Romans had two different Sun deities, *Sol indiges* and *Sol inuictus*. Although Justa did not indicate which one she meant, it seems highly improbable that she would have ignored the decisive adjective had she meant *Sol inuictus*. If this is accepted, then the inscription follows the most common pattern, which had traditional Roman gods precede newer ones. Less hypothetical is the fact that Sol and Sarapis were connected with the fertility cycle albeit they were natural opposites. Sol

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[26] G. Ristow *Römischer Götterhimmel und frühes Christentum* (Köln, 1980), 55-6.

[27] *SIRIS* 720 = *CIL* XIII 8246.

belonged to the celestial sphere while Sarapis was related to the Underworld. The joining of the two reveals an understanding of their shared characteristics.

The phrase *cum sua cline* has received various interpretations but its explanation as a cultic meal of the offerings given by the cult initiates to the worshipped deity makes the most sense. Evidence for a *cline* (eating couch) is a depiction of Isis and Sarapis reclining on a *cline* found on a lid of a cultic vessel from the Rhône Valley and from Augusta Vindelicum (Augsburg)[28]. The formula *in honorem domus diuinae* started to appear in the mid second century and provides us with a *terminus post quem*.

The second inscription in which Sarapis is mentioned is a votive inscription on a limestone altar dedicated by a consular *beneficiarius* in 179.

> Text:
> I(oui) o(ptimo) m(aximo) et Sera|pi et Genio| loci L. Caesi|us Florenti|[5]nus b(ene)f(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis)| pro se et sui|is u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)| imp(eratoribus) Comm(odo)| II et U[er]o II co(n)s(ulibus)[29]
>
> Translation:
> To Jupiter the best and greatest and Serapis and the local *genius*, the consular *beneficiarius* L. Caesius Florentinus fulfilled gladly and deservedly for himself and his family his promise in the year of the second consulship of the Imperator Commodus and the second consulship of Verus

Between Rome's supreme deity and a universal, undefinable, local *genius* Florentinus added the name of Sarapis. The notion that the influence of commerce allowed the infiltration of the so-called oriental gods, as Domaszewski has noted, should be put to rest. On the other hand, his general statement that there was also a need to include the deity or those deities that 'operated' in the area[30] is

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[28] For a summary and an explanation Grimm (1969), 81, drawing of the lid fig. 39, description and bibliography p. 293, no. 1.

[29] *SIRIS* 717 = *CIL* XIII 12052.

[30] Domaszewski (1902), 210: "Eine allgemeine Verbreitung erhalten wahrscheinlich unter dem Einfluss des Handelsverkehrs, an den belebten Kreuzungspunkten, wo die stationes der Beneficiarii standen, die Kulte der orientalischen Götter. (...) Das Gefühl der Abhängigkeit von dem unsicheren Walten der Gottheiten während der Dauer ihres verantwortungsvollen Dienstes bestimmte die Beneficiarii, auf ihren Altären alle Gottheiten, genannte wie ungenannte zusammenzufassen, die in dem Raume, den die Strassen durchziehen wirken könnten."

certainly to the point. The decision of a *beneficiarius* to include, besides *Iuppiter optimus maximus*, one or several additional deities in his votive inscription depended, in addition to his personal convictions, also on specific conditions rooted in the local and personal environment. Isis and Sarapis were connected with shipping and the transport of goods, particularly the *annona*. The *nauigium Isidis*, the cultic festival of March 5, highlighted this. Shipping played an important role in the economic life of Cologne. The main naval base of the Roman Rhine fleet was located only a short distance north of the city, and a little upstream was a large mercantile port. Together with the interest some emperors demonstrated toward Isis and Sarapis[31], which, for example, found expression in the employment of the iconographic representation of the divine couple on coin issues and would eventually work its way into the common *Weltanschauung*, the possibility was created for the reception of Isis and/or Sarapis.

Since the inclusion of either one of these deities on an inscription does not mean that the dedicator was a cult initiate, Florentinus' choice to include Sarapis in his votive inscription can be attributed in part to the local and empire-wide conditions that brought about the integration of, and an increased interest in, Isis and Sarapis. The date of the inscription leaves no doubt that this dedication ought to be seen in the context of Arnouphis' rain miracle, which was thought to be the reason for the Roman victory over the Quadi. This miracle brought about an increased interest in the cult, especially in the Danubian provinces, and, as a series of dedications to the Alexandrian deities by leading military men stationed in these provinces suggests, an understanding of Isis and Sarapis as *dii conseruatores* defending the emperor and the empire.

A limestone altar dedicated to Isis indicates that the municipal council of the *colonia Claudia Ara Augusta Agrippinensium* was also well disposed toward Isis, who in this inscription carries the pantheistic Greek epithet *myrionyma*. The altar was found in the church of St. Gereon during its initial reconstruction after the Second World War. It has been suggested that the predecessor of the church was a mausoleum built by Julian's family. Julian, securing the Rhine border after the debacle of December 355, had stayed as Caesar for three years in Germania secunda. St. Gereon stood in a burial field

[31] This interest did not necessitate an initiation into the cult.

outside the *murus* of the *colonia* in the northwest corner of the city[32].

Text:
Isidi| myrió|nymo| [At *vel* Ve]tius|[5] [Firm?]us| [ex] uoto| suscepto| s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito) l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)[33]

Translation:
To Isis having countless names, [At- or Ve]tius [Firm?]us upholding his promise fulfilled it gladly and deservedly, the location had been given by a decree of the municipal council

St. Gereon further rendered an upper part of limestone altar dedicated to Isis as well as an intact one. The inscriptions offer us a German *nomen* (Afleugus) and a *cognomen* (Hansuia) hitherto unknown. The dedicants, Julia and Valeria Hansuia, were sisters. The two pieces are not dated and do not seem to have any visible decorations.

Text:
Is[i]d[i]| sacru[m]| Iulia A[f]|leugi| f(ilia) [..|---]| u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[34]

Translation:
Consecrated to Isis, Julia [---] the daughter of Afleugus, gladly and deservedly fulfilled her vow

Text:
Isidi| Ualeria| Afleugi| f(ilia) Hansuia| u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[35]

Translation:
To Isis, Valeria Hansuia daughter of Afleugus, gladly and deservedly fulfilled her vow

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[32] M. Riedel, "Gräberfeld Gereonsdriesch," and H. Hellenkemper, "St. Gereon," in *Köln II. Exkursionen: Nördliche Innenstadt, Führer zu vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Denkmälern*, Band 38 (Mainz, 1980), 187-211.

[33] *SIRIS* 721.

[34] *AE* 1990, 729.

[35] *AE* 1990, 730.

St. Ursula, a church located in another necropolis north of the *colonia* along the Roman road toward Neuss[36], yielded a statue of a sitting Isis with the inscription:

Text:
Isidi inuic[te][37]

Translation:
To the unconquerable Isis

The upper part of an altar with the same inscription[38] was found in the Maria-Ablaßplatz located between St. Gereon and St. Ursula. A cultic vessel with the engraving *Isidi*[39] emphasizes once more that a cult association existed in Cologne. A bronze tag with punctuated letters

Text:
Isidi Augu(stae)| Q. Fufius [Ri]ge|dus sacerd(os)[40]

Translation:
To Isis Augusta, the priest Q. Fufius [Ri]gedus

could be interpreted as a further confirmation of the existence of a public cult association, but uncertainty as to the place of discovery makes it a problematic piece of evidence.

2.2.1) Summary

The provincial capital of Germania inferior, the *colonia Claudia Ara Augusta Agrippinensium*, stands out with seven inscriptions mentioning Isis (including the bronze tag) and two addressing Sarapis. Considering the total number of inscriptions dedicated to the traditional deities, they constitute a small, but not insignificant, portion of found and recorded epigraphical material. It is interesting to note that the inscriptions to Isis have been found outside the northern side of the *murus*. Among them it is the one of Dextrina Justa that encourages the conclusion that a cult association had been

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[36] H. Hellenkemper, "St. Ursula," in *Köln II. Exkursionen: Nördliche Innenstadt, Führer zu vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Denkmälern*, Band 38 (Mainz, 1980), 227-35.

[37] *SIRIS* 718 = *CIL* XIII 8190.

[38] *SIRIS* 719 = *CIL* XIII 8191: Isidi inuic[te].

[39] *SIRIS* 723.

[40] *SIRIS* 722.

established in the provincial capital of Germania inferior. Its place of worship might have been somewhere along the northern side of the Roman wall, in the area delineated by St. Gereon, St. Ursula, and the Gothic cathedral. Again, caution needs to be exercised in regard to the various art objects found in the provincial capital of Germania inferior that can be connected with Isis and Sarapis and other deities of Egyptian origin[41]. They do not necessarily point to the existence of a cult association.

The votive inscription of the *beneficiarius* L. Caesius Florentinus, such as the one of L. Lucretius Faustinianus from Voorburg, should not be mistaken for a statement of a cult initiate. It is simply an acknowledgement that deities are thought to 'operate' in a specific area or, more generally, in the whole empire. And, on a more individual basis, these deities could be thought responsible for the successful accomplishment of a task. This divine responsibility, however, has to be seen as firmly embedded in the context of the *do ut des* principle.

The funeral inscription of the Alexandrian Horus, a look-out man (*proreta*) of the Roman fleet stationed in Cologne in pre-Flavian times[42], does not prove that Alexandrians introduced the cult. The greatest percentage of the relevant inscriptions, the most reliable testimony, from the various Rhine and Danubian provinces falls in the chronological range of the mid to late second to the early third century. The introduction of the cult of Isis and Sarapis or their appearance independently from the cult occurred at a time when Alexandria's political heritage had entirely merged with the Graeco-Roman one.

3) Conclusion

The absence of any relevant epigraphical material from the provincial capital of Germania superior, Mogontiacum (Mainz), is most striking. Various art objects depicting Egyptian deities, on the other hand, have been found. While they attest personal interest in Egyptian or Egyptianizing art objects or even religious devotion, they do not prove the existence of an *Iseum* with a cult association. In the case of Germania superior, an *Iseum* stood in Aquae Helveti-

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[41] Grimm (1969), nos. 14A, 17, 23-70.

[42] *CIL* 8322. Discussion and further bibliography Grimm (1969), 87 and no. 21.

orum, far removed from the *limes*, but on a road that connected the interior of the province with important trading centers in Northern Italy. Privately financed, this temple stood on land donated by the village council. The construction fell into a period when the cult of Isis and Sarapis had received an additional impetus through an increased imperial interest and the fact that the Ptolemaic myth of succession, based on the myth of Isis, best explained the extraordinary position of the emperor.

The iconographic inclusion of Isis and Sarapis on an altar commemorating the tenure of a consular *beneficiarius* from Stockstadt serves as an example of the inclusion of the two deities among the *dii conseruatores*. The dedication of a *sistrum* by a paymaster should not be mistaken for proof of the existence of an *Iseum* in Nida. The paymaster could have placed the *sistrum* in the camp's sanctuary or a sanctuary of Fortuna or any other deity akin to Isis. It could also be that for Germania superior the same dichotomy is applicable as for Pannonia, namely that *Isea* stood in the interior of the province along important traffic routes while there were none along the *limes*.

While this dichotomy of interior and *limes* region cannot be duplicated in Germania inferior, a difference between the types of dedicatory patterns, those of individuals and cult associates and those of administrative employees or soldiers, who were not affiliated with the cult, can be observed. The two votive inscriptions, one from a *centurio* and the other from a *beneficiarius*, start off with *Iuppiter optimus maximus*. It is clear that for these two men Isis and Sarapis were only two among many other deities. The other gods had no place, however, on the dedications of private individuals whether they were initiated or only making good on a promise given exclusively to Isis or Sarapis.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DANUBIAN PROVINCES

Raetia

1) Short Historical Survey

The combined military operations of Tiberius and Drusus in 16 and 5 BCE led to the conquest of the Alpine tribes, among them the *Raeti* and the Celtic *Uindelici*[1], and the territorial annexation of the central Alpine region and the Swabian-Bavarian plateau[2]. At the northernmost point of the conquered area, at the end of a valley, about 30km south of the Danube at the confluence of the Wertach and the Lech, the Romans established a legionary camp on a natural elevation[3]. Schön argued that this campaign had neither a military nor an economic reason. The primary consideration was to fasten the western and eastern halves of the empire closer together. This was done with the purpose of improving traffic and supply lines between the two spheres and to facilitate a speedy recognition of a possible German offensive[4].

If we recall, however, the geographical position of Raetia and that a Germanic tribe had defeated the troops under the command of M.

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[1] The names of these Alpine peoples are recorded on an inscription, the *tropaeum Alpium* (P. Casimir *Le trophée d'Auguste à la Turbie* (Marseille, 1932), and in Pl. *Nat.* 3.136.

[2] During the Principate the province of Raetia included Tyrolia, the Vorarlberg, northeastern Switzerland, southwestern Bavaria, and parts of Baden-Württemberg. On the borders of the province see F. Schön *Der Beginn der römischen Herrschaft in Raetien* (Sigmaringen, 1986), 9.

[3] Augsburg-Oberhausen.

[4] Schön (1986), 29: "(...) der Alpenfeldzug von 15 v. Chr. weder aus wirtschaftlichen Erwägungen unternommen wurde noch dazu diente, eine unmittelbare Bedrohung Italiens abzuwenden oder eine Großoffensive zur Unterwerfung von Magna Germania einzuleiten. Das Ziel war vielmehr, die östlichen und westlichen Reichsteile stärker miteinander zu verklammern, die verkehrsgeographische Lage dieser Gebiete durch die Öffnung neuer Pässe und Nachschubwege zu verbessern und einen eventuellen Angriff germanischer Stämme schon rechtzeitig zu erkennen; zugleich ergab sich nun für die Römer eine günstigere Position, auch in Germanien römischen Einfluß verstärkt geltend zu machen."

Lollius, legate of *Gallia comata*[5], and that Pannonian tribes caused problems in Illyricum, then the annexation of Raetia could also have been, like the peaceful appropriation of Noricum, part of a military strategy born of the necessity to secure and stabilize unstable parts of the empire. This, however, should not be equated with a long term strategic offensive plan with the final goal of subjugating all of Germania[6]. With the exception of C. Julius Caesar, who went out to conquer new areas, Rome's subsequent territorial expansion was in actuality a chain of successful reactions to conditions that were thought to jeopardize the status quo. Even Augustus' expansionist foreign policy followed this pattern. M. Lollius' defeat by a Germanic tribe necessitated Augustus' presence in Gaul in 16 BCE, where he stayed until 13 BCE. While in Gaul, he rearranged the administration of this province and prepared the various military campaigns of Drusus and Tiberius. The presence of originally three legions, the *XIII gemina*, the *XVI*, and the *XXI rapax*, highlights the temporary strategic significance of the province for the securing of Germania and Illyricum based on its central geographical position.

The commander of the three legions stationed in Raetia was also governor of the province with the title *legatus pro praetore in Uindelicis*[7]. Between 15 BCE and 9 CE, the *legio XXI rapax* was the only legion remaining in Raetia, while the *legio XIII gemina* was moved to Illyricum and the *legio XVI* to Germany. The Varian debacle necessitated the move of the *XXI rapax* to Germany while the *XIII gemina* returned to Raetia. Germanicus' offensive against the Germans brought the transfer of the last legion stationed in Raetia, the *XIII gemina*, to Germany. From this point on, auxiliary forces protected Raetia and a *praefectus* administered the province. Claudius replaced the *praefectus* with a *procurator*. This administrative system was maintained until Marcus Aurelius stationed a legion in Raetia, the newly created *legio III Italica*, and its commander, a *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, held the governorship of Raetia. Although the legion was stationed in Castra Regina (Regensburg), the administra-

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[5] Vell. 2.97.

[6] K. Kraft, "Zu den Schlagmarken des Tiberius und Germanicus. Ein Beitrag zur Datierung des Legionslager Vindonissa und Oberhausen," *Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte* 2 (1950-1), 21-35, especially p. 34, formulated the idea of a comprehensive offensive policy.

[7] G. Winkler, "Die Statthalter der römischen Provinz Raetien unter dem Prinzipat," *Bayrische Vorgeschichtsblätter* 36 (1971), 50-101.

tive headquarters of the province remained in Augusta Vindelicum (Augsburg).

Claudius had the *uia Claudia Augusta* extended. It included Augusta Vindelicum and led to the banks of the Danube. The *uia Claudia Augusta*, beginning in the Po valley and ending at the Danube, had a tremendous economic impact on Augusta Vindelicum and destined it to develop into the administrative and trading center of Raetia. The town itself had been established after the retreat of the legion in the first decade of the first century. Hadrian granted the city municipal status in 122/3[8].

The Flavians advanced the border beyond the Danube and began the construction of an artificial border, the *limes*, which was concluded during the reign of Antoninus Pius. His successor, Marcus Aurelius, fighting off Germanic tribes, secured Raetia by adding the newly formed *legio III Italica concors* to the three *alae* and thirteen *cohortes*[9]. Castra Regina (Regensburg), northeast of Augusta Vindelicum and directly on the Danube, became its headquarters, replacing an auxiliary cohort that had been placed there since Flavian times. Its commander, a *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, became the provincial governor, replacing the equestrian *procurator*. The seat of the provincial administration, however, remained in Augusta Vindelicum.

Raetia, a military province[10], suffered from barbarian invaders during the so-called Marcomannic Wars. The *limes* proved an insufficient deterrent for the Alemanni already in the last years of Alexander Severus' reign, but it was not abandoned until the late fifties of the third century when the Danube became the border once more. The final 'deathblow' for the province came in the late fifth century with the increased appearance of Germanic tribes which neither the military contingents nor any diplomatic arrangements could deter from occupying and controlling the Raetian plain.

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[8] Tacitus' comment *Germ.* 41 (*in splendidissima Raetiae prouinciae colonia*) should not be taken as a legal designation but as a paraphrase suitable for *Kunstprosa*.

[9] This in 166, under Trajan, in 107, four *alae* and eleven *cohortes*.

[10] They were only five "cities" in the whole province, namely, Augusta Vindelicum (Augsburg), Castra Regina (Regensburg), Cambodunum (Kempten), Brigantium (Bregenz), and Curia (Chur).

2) The Inscription from Augusta Vindelicum

Although very few remains have been found of Augusta Vindelicum[11], it is safe to assume that its urban pattern was not different from any other provincial capital. Following Tacitus' remark[12], we should not hesitate to imagine a relatively sophisticated layout. The ethnic make-up of the city was mixed. Among the indigenous Celts were imperial administrative employees, Italian merchants, and immigrants from various areas of the empire[13].

The only Raetian inscription regarding Isis is an undated votive inscription from the provincial capital. It was found in the proximity of the cathedral, where two buildings, one with murals and a mosaic, were discovered. East of this area a *hypocausteum* was unearthed and farther, in the same direction, a bath and a cistern[14]. The text of the inscription was written downward in three columns with the concluding line written across the bottom of the three columns. Between the first and second, and the second and third column, the dedicator, Flavius Eudiapractus, had a pair of feet depicted. Incised on the left foot is a wavy line interpreted as a snake[15].

Text:
Fl(auius)| Eu|dia|prac|tus|^{c1} Isi|di| reg(inae)|^{c2} ex| uo|to|^{c3} s(oluit)$^{inf.c1}$ l(ibens)$^{inf.c2}$ m(erito) p(osuit)$^{inf.c3}$ [16]

Translation:
Flavius Eudiapractus gladly and deservedly fulfilled his vow to Isis the Queen, and put this up

The dedicator's *cognomen* suggests Greek or servile origin. The palaeography and the lack of a *praenomen* suggest the third century as a possible date range for the inscription. Eudiapractus' dedication undoubtedly followed the healing of a foot ailment[17]. Despite the

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[11] L. Ohlenroth, "Augusta Vindelicum," *Germania* 32 (1954): 76-85; W. Schleiermacher, "Augusta Vindelicum," in *Germania Romana I: Römerstädte in Deutschland, Gymnasium* Beiheft 1 (Heidelberg, 1960), 78-89.

[12] *Germ.* 41.

[13] H.-J. Kellner, "Augsburg, Provinzhauptstadt Raetiens," *ANRW* II 5.2 (Berlin and New York, 1976), 690-717.

[14] The inscription was found in Fronhof 6, previously Kremerhaus D 115, which corresponds on Ohlenroth's map [Ohlenroth (1954)] with no. 42.

[15] Vidmann called it a *uraeus*.

[16] *SIRIS* 646 and new reading *AE* 1982, 726.

[17] See *AE* 1982, 726.

lack of further archaeological detail of the area where the inscription has been found, the proximity of a *hypocausteum*, a bath, and a cistern implies that Eudiapractus found a cure through water treatment.

3) Summary

While similar undercurrents might have been present in Augusta Vindelicum as in Aquae Helvetiorum, it remains still to be seen whether the Raetian city possessed an *Iseum*. Even Eudiapractus' dedication and a vessel lid depicting Isis and Sarapis reclining on a *cline*[18] together with other finds, ranging from statuettes to medallions and clay molds depicting the Alexandrian deities[19], do not necessarily lead to such an inference. It could also be possible that an indigenous deity had been identified as Isis. If we consider the Celtic background of the city and the healing properties assigned by the Celts to water, a belief that can be found elsewhere, this hypothesis is presently the more convincing one. In addition, it is interesting to note that the only inscription and most of the objects come from Augusta Vindelicum, the provincial capital and the economic center of Raetia, and not from the militarized border zone.

Noricum

1) Short Historical Survey

The integration of the kingdom of Noricum[20] into the *imperium Romanum* occurred contemporaneously with the annexation of Raetia. Noricum encompassed roughly the area of the eastern Alps. The Danube formed its northern border. The eastern border, shared with Pannonia, extended along the line Scarbantia (Sopron) - Emona (Ljubljana). Raetia lay on its western side with the river Aenus (Inn) as the dominant border marker. In the South, towards Italy and southwestern Pannonia, the various mountain ranges formed the province's periphery[21]. While Magdalensberg, probably the ancient

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[18] See Chapter Four, Cologne.

[19] Grimm (1969), nos. 136-139B.

[20] The most comprehensive examination is G. Alföldy *Noricum*, trans. A. Birley (London and Boston, 1974). See also G. Winkler, "Noricum und Rom," *ANRW* II 6 (Berlin and New York, 1977), 183-262.

[21] *Alpes Tridentinae* (Dolomites), *Alpes Carnicae* (Carnic Alpes), and the *Cara-*

Noreia[22], was the first provincial capital and seat of a *praefectus ciuitatum*, it was eventually replaced by the *municipium Claudium Uirunum* (in the vicinity of modern Zollfeld)[23]. Virunum, located on a plain, became the seat of a *procurator* of equestrian rank, who had replaced the prefect and was in charge of the *auxilia*, the *inuentus Noricorum*, and the *conuentus ciuium Romanorum*.

The *municipium Flauium Solua* was founded in the beginning of Vespasian's reign. Under Domitian and Nerva, the Romans successfully pushed the Quadi and Marcommani out of the area. Hadrian created two *municipia*, Ovilava and Cetium, and the Danubian *limes* was further secured, especially under Antoninus Pius. In order to combat the German tribes under the leadership of the Marcommani, Marcus Aurelius placed the newly created *legio II Italica* at Lauriacum and its commander became, as *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, governor of Noricum with seat in Ovilava. During the wars, the legion was moved from Lauriacum to Ločica and back to Lauriacum again. This city became the home base of the *legio II Italica* during the reign of Commodus. Antoninus Caracalla gave the civil settlement next to *canabae legionis* of Lauricum municipal standing while Ovilava became a *colonia*[24]. In the end Noricum, like Raetia, could not withstand the assault of the Germanic tribes in the fifth century and had to be abandoned.

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uanca Mons (Karawanken and Steiner Alps).

[22] Despite R. Egger *Die Stadt auf dem Magdalensberg ein Grosshandelsplatz; die ältesten Aufzeichnungen des Metallwarenhandels auf dem Boden Österreichs, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften*, phil.-hist. Klasse, Denkschrift 79 (Wien, 1961) it is difficult not to identify Noreia as the one on the Magdalensberg especially since the settlement was the territorial center of the Celtic Norici. G. Piccottini, "Die Stadt auf dem Magdalensberg - ein spätkeltisches und frührömisches Zentrum im südlichen Noricum," *ANRW* II 6 (Berlin and New York, 1977), 263-301, provides a further study on this settlement.

[23] *CIL* III 11555. H. Vetters, "Virunum," *ANRW* II 6 (Berlin and New York, 1977), 302-54 and on the provincial administration G. Winkler *Die Reichsbeamten von Noricum und ihr Personal bis zum Ende der römischen Herrschaft* (Wien, 1969).

[24] B. and H. Galsterer, "Zum Stadtrecht von Lauriacum," *BJ* 171 (1971), 334-48 and H. Vetters, "Lauriacum," *ANRW* II 6 (Berlin and New York, 1977), 355-79.

2) Inscriptions

Until now the province Noricum has furnished only four inscriptions relevant to our topic. Each one of them comes from a different location in Carinthia. Three come from Celtic locations and only one from the provincial capital. The inscription from the Ulrichsberg by Feistritz-Pulst is the earliest. Like the other 'holy mountain' in Carinthia, the Magdalensberg, which served also as the political center, the Ulrichsberg towered with its 1,015m over all the other hills in the area[25] and for the inhabitants must have been a natural choice as a place of cultic worship. The divine protectress of the Celtic Norici and the territory they controlled was the goddess Noreia. The Romans identified this all-encompassing goddess as Fortuna. Like Isis, Noreia had a male consort and protected the living as well as the dead. Water, as the elaborate water collection and distribution system of the various uncovered sanctuaries emphasize, played an important part in the cultic ceremonies[26]. Water, besides being the reason for the growth of plants, was thought to have purifying and medicinal properties. It was magical because it originated in the sky as well as in the earth.

Egger, who led the excavation on the Ulrichsberg in the 1930s and edited the inscription[27]

> Text:
> Noreiae Isidi e[t Casuontano] | A. Trebonius --- | proc(urator) [Augusti regni Norici *vel* prouinciae Noricae][28]
>
> Translation:
> Noreia Isis [and Casuontanus[29]] A. Trebonius --- procurator Augusti of the kingdom Noricum *or* the province Noricum

agreed with other scholars that it belonged in the first century. Since the inscription does not provide any clue of the original content, Egger could not decide which part Trebonius had built and whether

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[25] Description of the area and archaeological survey R. Egger, "Der Ulrichsberg. Ein heiliger Berg Kärntens," *Carinthia* I 140 (1950), 29-78.

[26] H. Kenner, "Die Götterwelt der Austria Romana," *JÖAI* 43 (1956), 59.

[27] Egger (1950), 48.

[28] *SIRIS* 648 = *CIL* III 4810 = *ILS* 4864.

[29] Maybe the name of Noreia's consort. See Egger (1950), 44-6 and Kenner (1956), 59-60.

he had done it following an imperial order or just for himself[30]. Even if Trebonius was the son of Trebonius Garutianus[31] and his procuratorship fell in the period of Domitian's Principate[32], neither Domitian, nor any other emperor for that matter, would have ordered the construction or the remodelling of a Noreian sanctuary. Their interest in such undertakings lay in Rome and its immediate vicinity, while the governors and the affluent Romanized inhabitants took care of their part of the world for the glory of Rome. If Trebonius built something on the Ulrichsberg, then he did it on his own account.

A more complicated and intriguing question concerns the architectural layout of the sanctuary. Egger concluded that the building stood in the first century and followed the pattern of "heilige Häuser der Jenseitsreligionen[33]." If the inhabitants around the Ulrichsberg built the sanctuary on their own, then they must have been Romanized, since they employed an 'imported' architectural blueprint. But Romanized people more readily embraced traditional Roman gods before they turned to the new arrivals in the Roman pantheon. Even Romans sent to the outskirts of the empire would associate the newly encountered indigenous deities with older established ones. In the case of Noricum this brought the association of Noreia with Fortuna. In return, the Noreians would see in a representation of Fortuna their Noreia. The association of Noreia with Isis, who also had been connected with Fortuna, has to be envisioned similarily. The connection was first made by Romans or Romanized people, who had been exposed to Isis elsewhere. Coming to Noreia, they encountered the goddess of the indigenous inhabitants and could not help but connect her with Isis. On the other hand, it is highly improbable that first century Noreians coming to Rome or a provincial capital would find *Jenseitsgötter* and their temples eclipsing those of the traditional Roman deities. But this architectural and intellectual environment exactly dictated their choice. In the case of the sanctuary on the Ulrichsberg, all this would mean was that the governor Trebonius,

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[30] Egger (1950), 48.

[31] *AE* 1968, 410: f(ilius) Garutianus. Tac. *Hist.* 1.7.1. Trebonius was the imperial agent of Africa under Galba.

[32] This would make A. Trebonius the *procurator prouinciae Noricae* during a time in which Isis and Sarapis had a safe place among the more traditional deities.

[33] Egger (1950), 69-70, especially p. 70: "Als Beispiele mögen angeführt werden das Haus der Iobakchen in Athen, (...) und das Kulthaus der syrischen Götter auf dem Ianiculum in Rom, das als Doppelanlage unserer besonders nahe steht."

because of his powerful position, was most probably the driving force behind its construction and his inscription testimony thereof. Along this train of thought, it would, in the context of Romanization, not be surprising if the other temples of Noreia in Carinthia duplicated the Ulrichsberg sanctuary, even if only partially.

A square base, probably of a statue with a votive inscription to Isis Noreia from the second century, found in the sanctuary of Noreia in Hohenstein provides not only interesting information about the leasing system but also demonstrates that new arrivals associated Isis with Noreia. The statuettes of Fortuna dedicated by Romans and placed in the sanctuary emphasize the mechanics of the identification process occasioned by the encounter of a new deity.

Text:
Isidi Norei(ae)| u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)| pró salúte| Q. Septuei|[5] Clementis| c(onductoris) fer(rariarum) N(oricarum) p(artis) d(imidiae)| et Ti. Cl(audi) Heraclae| et Cn. Octa(ui) Secundi| proc(uratorum) fer(rariarum) Q. Septueius|[10] Ualéns proc(urator) fer(rariarum)[34]

Translation:
Isis Noreia, for the well-being of Q. Septueius Clemens, the leaseholder of half of the Noreian iron-mines and Ti. Claudius Heracla and Cn. Octavus Secundus, both administrators of the iron-mines, Q. Septueius Valens, an administrator of the iron-mines, fulfilled his vow gladly and deservedly

Valens' employment of 'Isis Noreia' is not surprising at all when one considers that both were connected with the underworld and that mining underneath the earth's surface meant direct exposure to the realm of these two deities. Fortuna's *cornucopia* is not far away considering the profit iron-mines could furnish their leaseholder and administrative staffs. The leasing of imperial mines to large-scale leaseholders with their own administrative staff started in the beginning of the second century and was employed down to the middle decades of that century[35]. Three administrators, one of them a relative of the leaseholder, managed mines which constituted half of those available in Noricum.

A temple of Noreia, built in the first to second century, stood on the Frauenberg near Leibnitz, which, just like the Ulrichsberg or the

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[34] *SIRIS* 647 = *CIL* III 4806 = *ILS* 1467 = *ILLPR* 151.

[35] Alföldy (1974), 115.

Magdalensberg, towered above the other hills of the area[36]. This dating would confirm the assumption that the Ulrichsberg sanctuary could have served as a prototype. The inscription found on a marble block in the sanctuary is unfortunately too fragmented to yield any useful information beyond what has already been discussed.

Text:
Isi[di Noreiae?]| C. Pro---[37]

Translation:
Isis [Noreia?], C. Pro---

The inscription from Virunum does not follow the pattern of the ones discussed above. The consecration is to Isis alone.

Text:
Isidi| Aug(ustae) sacr(um)| [C.] Iulius| [O]nesimus|[5] [et] Pompeia| [Ma?]cronia et| [Iul]ia Ingenua f(ilia)| [u(otum)] s(oluerunt) l(ibentes) m(erito)[38]

Translation:
Consecrated to Isis Augusta, [C.] Julius [O]nesimus and Pompeia [Ma?]cronia and their daughter Julia Ingenua have fulfilled their vow gladly and deservedly

The inscription, chronologically placed in the first to the second century, should not be mistaken as evidence for the existence of a cult association in Virunum. It implies nothing more than the fulfillment of a vow once given to Isis for a reason unknown to us except for the conjecture that it must have been in Isis' sphere of competence. Since the inscription has been found inserted into a wall of the castle Töltschach above Zollfeld, its original location in Virunum cannot be established. If the dedication was put up in public, then the area known as 'Tempelacker' across from the theater

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[36] W. Modrijan *Frauenberg bei Leibnitz* (Leibnitz, 1955).

[37] *SIRIS* 650.

[38] *SIRIS* 649 = *CIL* III 4817. Augusta is one of the more common epithets of Isis. It occurs thirty-two times in Vidman's *SIRIS* collection. With the exception of two inscriptions from Mauretania (*SIRIS* 793, 794), which have been dated second to third century CE, all the dated inscriptions fall into the period of the first to second century CE. Nine inscriptions come from Gallia Cisalpina (*SIRIS* 603-7, 622, 624, 630, 638), seven from Pannonia superior (*SIRIS* 652-5, 661-2, 664), and three from Gallia Narbonensis (*SIRIS* 730, 735, 745). Campania, Istria, and Hispania yielded two each (*SIRIS* 486, 503, 596a, 598, 760, 765), Rome, Etruria, and Germania inferior one (*SIRIS* 399, 577, 722).

should be taken into consideration since it lies directly on the way to Töltschach[39].

3) Summary

Only four inscriptions relevant to our topic have been found in Noricum so far; nevertheless, an interesting pattern can be discerned. The three inscriptions found on so-called 'holy mountains,' i.e. locations of Celtic worship, have been dedicated to the syncretic Isis Noreia while the one from the provincial capital Virunum addresses Isis alone. Although one inscription to Isis Noreia is too fragmented to provide any useful information, the two remaining ones reveal one dedicator as provincial *procurator* and the other as administrator of privately leased Noreian iron-mines. Besides knowledge and personal interest in Isis, the common motive for both dedications to Isis Noreia might be sought in two men's contact with the Celtic population and their *Weltanschauung*, and in the realization that Noreia's characteristics best matched those of Isis. Whether Trebonius, *procurator* of Noricum sometime in the first century, was the first to forge the connection between the two goddesses cannot be proven. It is certain, however, that once such a link was established and found architectural and artistic expression it was bound to be picked up again by others, natives and foreigners alike.

Illyricum: Dalmatia and Pannonia

1) A Short Historical Survey

The history of Illyricum is actually the history of the various Illyrian tribes. Their territory extended from the Adriatic Sea to the Gulf of Valona. To the north it reached the eastern Alps and the Danube. To the east it streched in parts beyond the Balkan range. The Illyri, who had given the region its name, had settled between Scodra and the river Mati. The partially Celticized Delmatae, from whom the region on the east side of the Adriatic received its name, lived in the region behind Salona (near Split). The Pannonians, who had also been assimilated to Celtic culture, inhabited the area between Carnuntum

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[39] R. Egger, "Aus dem römischen Kärnten," *Carinthia* I 128 (1938), 10-5, provides a short topographical description.

(between Petronell and Deutsch-Altenburg) and Sirmium (Mitrovica) in the Save valley[40].

When Illyrians attacked Adriatic shipping, the Romans intervened in the late third century BCE. During the Second Punic War the Illyrian domain served as a buffer zone between Rome and Macedonia. For this service they received Macedonian territory. Half a century later, the Illyrian chief Gentius sided with Perseus against the Romans. Perseus' defeat at Pydna in 168 BCE, however, brought Illyricum under Roman control.

The Delmatae, who had successfully revolted against the Illyrian Gentius, were able to retain their independence after 168 BCE. In the early 150s, the Delmatae attacked Roman allies, i.e. Adriatic cities that comprised *conuentus ciuium Romanorum*. Roman retribution came in form of an invasion, 156-5 BCE, during which the capital Delminium was destroyed[41]. Sporadic Roman campaigns followed in 118-17 and 78-77 BCE. Caesar had received Illyricum together with Gallia Cisalpina in 59 BCE and in the winter months administered the province from Aquileia[42]. In 51 BCE, he sent troops against the Delmatae, but they were defeated. During the Civil War they, along with other Illyrian tribes, in contrast to those located along the coast line, sided with Pompey and prevailed over Caesar's legates Q. Cornificius and A. Gabinius in 48-47 BCE. A year later, however, aware of Caesar's military and political potential, they surrendered. P. Vatinius' strike against them in 45-44 BCE seems to have been a move to quell the last resistance.

Octavian began an offensive against the Iapodes[43] in the spring of 35 BCE[44]. He defeated them, captured Siscia (Sisak), and garri-

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[40] Dalmatia: J.J. Wilkes *Dalmatia* (Cambridge MA, 1969) and G. Alföldy *Bevölkerung und Gesellschaft der römischen Provinz Dalmatien* (Budapest, 1965). Pannonia: A. Dobó *Die Verwaltung der römischen Provinz Pannonien* (Amsterdam, 1968), A. Mócsy, "Pannonia," *RE* Supp.9 (Stuttgart, 1962), 515-776 and *Die Bevölkerung Pannoniens bis zu den Markomannenkriegen* (Budapest, 1959), P. Oliva *Pannonia and the Onset of Crisis in the Roman Empire* (Prague, 1962).

[41] C. Patsch, "Delminium," *RE* 8.2 (Stuttgart, 1901), 2457-9.

[42] Caes. *BGall* 2.35 and 5.1-2.

[43] N. Vulič, "Iapodes," *RE* 17.2 (Stuttgart, 1914), 724: "Die Iapoden sind ursprünglich Illyrier gewesen; um 400 v. Chr. wurden sie von Kelten unterjocht und später stellen sie ein Mischvolk dar." And 725: "Die Iapoden erstreckten sich von Istrien bis zum heutigen Fluss Una, wo bei Bihač ein wichtiges iapodisches Heiligtum gefunden worden ist. Ihre Stämme sind Monetiner, Avendeaten, Asupiner (...)."

[44] G. Veith *Die Feldzüge des C. Iulius Caesar Octavianus in Illyrien* (Wien,

soned it. A year later Octavian set out against the Delmatae and conquered most of their territory. Then, Octavian's full attention was centered on his rival Mark Antony. In 27 BCE, the Senate and the People of Rome awarded Augustus the province Illyricum. His interest, however, was then focused on Gaul, Spain, Sicily, Greece, and areas further east, regions already Romanized that needed to be re-consolidated. It was the offensive of Pannonian tribes and the Norici against the Istrian coastline that triggered the annexation of Noricum under P. Silius Nerva in 16 BCE[45] followed in 15 BCE by Tiberius' offensive against the Scordisci[46]. The Romans had to surpress an uprising of Pannonians in 14[47], and again 13 BCE[48].

The final conquest came with Tiberius' campaign[49] in the area between the Savus (Sava) and Dravus (Drava)[50]. The Pannonians were conquered but their spirit was not yet broken. When the Delmatae rose against the Romans in 11 BCE, the Pannonians joined them. Tiberius defeated them once more. Opposition to Roman rule did not take hold, and the Pannonians and Delmatae failed in their final attempt to defy their conqueror's yoke in 6-9 CE. Illyricum was divided[51] into Illyricum superior (Dalmatia) and Illyricum inferior (Pannonia[52]) around 9 CE to separate, as Mócsy demonstrated, the defeated tribes from those still opposing Roman rule[53]. The two areas were turned into imperial provinces probably in the same year, governed by *legati Augusti pro praetore* of consular rank. The governor of Dalmatia resided at Salona; the governor of Pannonia, at Carnuntum.

Three Roman legions were stationed for the defense of the province, one in Emona (Ljubljana)[54], the other in Poetovio

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1914).

[45] Vel. Pat. 2.90.4 and D.C. *Hist.* 54.20.

[46] The Scordisci were an Illyric-Celtic tribe. See Mócsy (1959), 78.

[47] D.C. *Hist.* 54.24.3.

[48] D.C. *Hist.* 54.28.1, Vel. Pat. 2.96, and Flor. 2.24.

[49] D.C. *Hist.* 54.31.5, 33.5; Vel. Pat. 2.96; Front. 2.1.15.

[50] Ruf. *Fest.* 7 and Flor. 2.24.

[51] E. Koestermann, "Der pannonische-dalmatische Krieg 6-9 n. Chr.," *Hermes* 81 (1953), 350, n. 1 and Mócsy (1962), 583-4.

[52] Vel. Pat. 2.110.3 and Suet. *Tib.* 16.1 state that Pannonia was only now incorporated into the *imperium Romanum*. Dobó (1968), 11: "Velleius war der erste, der die Benennung Pannonia für die Bezeichnung der Provinz gebrauchte."

[53] Mócsy (1962), 547.

[54] The *legio XV Apollinaris* and a *colonia* settlement of veterans.

(Ptuj)[55], and the third in Siscia (Sisak)[56]. The legion from Emona was transferred to Carnuntum after the Pannonian mutiny in 14 CE[57]. During Tiberius' reign, settlements of veterans were founded in the western part of the province. These settlements were along the route Sirmium (Mitrovica) - Sopianae (Pécs) - Valcum (Fenekpuszta south of Keszthely) - Savaria (Szombathely) - Scarbantia (Sopron)[58] which linked the east and the west diagonally through Pannonia. The Romans did not penetrate to the Danube along its middle course until Claudius' time, when the territory north of the Drava was occupied and a systematic integration into the *imperium Romanum* took place[59].

Early in his reign, Trajan had Pannonia divided. Pannonia superior comprised the western part and had its provincial capital at Carnuntum[60]. A consular legate governed this province, while a legate of praetorian rank commanded Pannonia inferior, the smaller area in the east, from Aquincum (Budapest). Aquincum had been an auxiliary station under Tiberius. Domitian placed the *legio II adiutrix* there. Trajan replaced it with the *legio X gemina*, while the *legio II adiutrix* was despatched to Dacia. It returned and was Aquincum's permanent garrison until a temporary despatchment in the 160's and the final replacement through the *legio IV Flauia felix* under Septimius Severus. His son M. Aurelius Antoninus (Caracalla) tried to equalize the military strength of the two provincial armies and the rank of the governor of Pannonia inferior was upgraded from praetorian to consular.

Until the end of the second century, Pannonia could accomplish the task for which it was destined. By the beginning of the third century, however, the constant flow of migrating peoples could no longer be held back or diverted. When, as a result of Gothic inva-

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[55] The *legio VIII Augusta* until 43-5, then the *legio XIII gemina* until 98 when Trajan established a *colonia* (*Ulpia Traiana Poetouio*).

[56] The *legio IX Hispana*. A *colonia* was established there under Vespasian. Septimius Severus conferred the title *Septimia*.

[57] Tact. *Ann.* 1.16-29. J.J. Wilkes, "A Note on the Mutiny of the Pannonian Legion in A.D. 14," *CQ* 57 (1963), 268-71.

[58] Cities in the most western part of Pannonia. For more detail on these locations see Mócsy (1962), 612.

[59] L. Barkóczi, "History of Pannonia," in *The Archaeology of Pannonia*, eds. A. Lengyel and G.T.B. Radan (Budapest, 1980), 91-2; on town foundations see pp. 99-100 and Mócsy (1962), 596-600.

[60] E. Swoboda *Carnuntum, seine Geschichte und seine Denkmäler* (Graz and Köln, 1964).

sions, Dacia had to be abandoned under the emperor Aurelian in 270, Pannonia lost its protective shield and became the interceptor of migrating people. Even Diocletian's subdivision of Pannonia superior and inferior could not change this[61].

2) Inscriptions

2.1) Dalmatia

Salona had been a predominantly Greek city, colonized by Greek settlers from the region around the Gulf of Manios. The Delmatae captured the city for the first time in the mid-second century BCE. The fact that L. Caecilius Metellus could use Salona as his winter camp in 119-118 BCE[62] leads one to conclude that the Delmatae, as most nomadic tribes, had no long term interest in the city. After 'the capture,' they retreated to the hinterland. Metellus set out against the Delmatae in 117 BCE. He returned triumphant to Rome and with part of the booty he rebuilt two temples[63]. The proconsul C. Cosconius had a more difficult time in securing Salona but its capture in 78-77 BCE broke the control of the Delmatae over the city. Roman citizens increasingly took up residence in Salona and their settlement developed in Caesar's time into a *conuentus ciuium Romanorum*[64], while Salona held the legal status of a *ciuitas libera et foederata*.

Either Caesar or Octavian Augustus turned the *conuentus* of Salona into a *colonia* with the designation *colonia Martia Julia Salona*[65]. The establishment of Dalmatia as a province and the almost natural elevation of the oldest Roman colony to provincial capital brought with it a surge in construction activity and development of infrastructure. During the Marcomannic Wars the city wall was reinforced by members of the newly raised legions, the *legio II*

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[61] Pannonia superior was divided into Pannonia prima in the north with the provincial capital in Savaria and Pannonia ripariensis or Savia with Siscia as its capital in the south. Pannonia inferior was also partitioned into two spheres: Valeria in the north with Aquincum and Sopianae as its main centers and Pannonia secunda in the south with the capital Sirmium.

[62] App. *Ill.* 11.

[63] One of them could have been a temple of Isis.

[64] Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.9.2-3.

[65] *CIL* III 1933.

pia and the *legio III concordia*. They were later replaced by the *legio II* and the *legio III Italica*.

With this history it is hardly surprising that Salona belongs to the epigraphically richest cities of the Roman empire. Until now, however, only one inscription has surfaced that attests the presence of a *collegium Sarapidis*. It is certainly unfortunate that this inscription, a testimony of deep marital devotion, is lost.

> Text:
> L. Cassio Hermo|doro nauclero| qui erat in colleg(io)| Serapis Salo-
> n(itano) per|[5] freta per maria tra|iectus saepe per und(as)| qui non de-
> buerat| obitus remanere| in Atern(o) set mecum|[10] coniunx si uiuere|
> nolueras at Styga| perpetua uel rate| funerea utinam| tecu(m) comita-
> ta|[15] fuisse(m)| Ulpia Candi|da domu Salon(itana) con(iugi)| b(ene)
> m(erenti) p(osuit)[66]
>
> Translation:
> For L. Cassius Hermodorus the shipowner, who was a member of the Salonitanian college of Serapis and often travelled through surges, through the sea, and through the waves and who ought not, in death, to have remained in Aternum but with me, his wife; if you did not wish to live, but <wished to see> the perpetual Styx, even by the funereal barque would that I had accompanied you, Ulpia Candida resident of Salona has put this up for her well-deserving husband

This *collegium Serapidis* was certainly an association to which various shipowners of Salona belonged. The choice of Sarapis as the name giving deity of this *collegium* is understandable when one recalls the protective function possessed by Sarapis. This function was intensified through Commodus' employment as protector of the *annona*. This *collegium* should not, however, be thought of as an association of initiated Isiac shipowners. As with any other professional college, the choice of a protective deity did not depend on cult initiation.

Decorations on a sarcophagus, together with the inscription found on its lid, made M.-Chr. Budischovsky identify the dedicator and his family as Isiacs, for the depicted boy had a so-called Horus lock[67].

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[66] *SIRIS* 677 = *CIL* IX 3337.

[67] M.-Chr. Budischovsky *La diffusion des cultes isiaques autour de la mer Adriatique, EPRO* 61 (Leiden, 1977), 192: Salonae, no. 3. L. Vidman concluded the same in "Zu einem Isisdenkmal aus Salonae," in *Hommages à Vermaseren, EPRO* 68, vol. 3 (Leiden, 1978), 1296-9.

The sarcophagus, however, does not yield any further information to prove this hypothesis.

> Text:
> D(is) M(anibus)| Aur(elio) Satrio| qui uixit a|nn(os) VIIII m(enses) IIII|[5] et Aur(eliae) Maxi|mae q|uae ui|xit ann(os) VI m(enses) III filis piissimis Aur(elii) Fla(u)us et Ceres parentes et is
>
> additional text: Uic(iria) Ursa con alu|m(n)is s(u)is P(ublio) Hipetiu et [...][68]
>
> Translation:
> To the gods of the underworld, to Aurelius Satrius, who lived nine years and four months, and Aurelia Maxima, who lived six years and three months, the most pious children of Aurelius, the parents Flavus and Ceres and the following
>
> additional text: Viciria Ursa with her (foster-) sons Publius Hypatius and ...

Budischovsky saw in these additional small and badly engraved letters a continuation of the text and read:

> Is(idis) uic(tricis) Ur(aniae?) Sa(rapidis) con(seruatori) al(umnis) s(uis) P(ublius) Hipetius et [...].

This reading, however, is more a sign of her eagerness to find additional proof for her hypothesis than an actual confirmation. The different style of the letters suggests a later addition rather than a continuation of the text. Since the parents dedicated their funeral inscription to the most traditional Roman deities of the dead, the *di manes*, the question arises whether the boy's Horus lock was a true sign of initiation or simply an acknowledgement of the notions of life after death as portrayed by the cult of Isis. Even if this family had been involved in the cult of Isis, their devotion cannot be projected onto other inhabitants of Salona and the existence of an Isiac cult association beyond the private sphere remains highly questionable.

Among the few inscriptions from Varvaria, a Liburnian hill-settlement that received municipal standing with Italian status under

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[68] *AE* 1978, 614 = *CIL* III 8921. Line 8: "filis" for "filiis" and "is" possibly for "eius."

Tiberius[69], is a consecration to Isis on a limestone altar. It has been assigned to the first half of the second century.

Text:
Isidi| sac(rum)| Raecia Mar|cella[70]

Translation:
Consecrated to Isis, Raecia Marcella

The interesting fact is not so much that the dedicator of this inscription was a woman but that she came from a prominent Liburnian and unquestionably highly Romanized family. One of its members found admission into the Roman Senate[71].

The Liburnian Senia, like Iader (Zadar) an Augustan colony, possessed an excellent harbor. From this harbor city a road led eastward into the interior of Dalmatia from which one could proceed northward to Siscia in the Sava valley. This geograpical location stimulated economic growth and attracted settlers, predominantly from northern Italy. Also located in Senia was a customs station, which, according to Wilkes, reflected the city's commercial importance[72]. A small marble base on which one can still discern the lower part of a sitting man provides the only relevant inscription. The text was placed on a bronze plate. In light of the inscription, the sitting figure was most likely Sarapis. This type of portrayal, however, is more common on reliefs than statuaries.

Text:
Sarmentius| Geminus| Sarapidi deo sancto[73]

Translation:
Sarmentius Geminus for the sacred god Sarapis

While the *cognomen* Geminus was relatively common, the name Sarmentius occurs nowhere else[74]. It could be related to the tribal name Sarmatae, although an *ethnicum* would show up as a *cognomen*. The two main branches of this Indo-European nomadic tribe

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[69] Wilkes (1969), 216 and on Liburnian *municipiae* G. Alföldy, "Municipes Tibériens et Claudiens en Liburnie," *Epigraphica* 23 (1961), 153-65.

[70] *AE* 1981, 696.

[71] G. Alföldy *Die Personennamen von Dalmatien. Beiträge zur Namensforschung*, Beiheft 4 (Heidelberg, 1969), 114.

[72] Wilkes (1969), 201.

[73] *SIRIS* 675 = *CIL* III 15092.

[74] Alföldy (1969), 117.

were the Roxolonai and the Iazyges, both clients of Rome. The latter settled between the Danube and the Theiss, and it could be that Sarmentius or an ancestor came from there.

The colony Iader, next to the provincial capital Salona the most important city in Dalmatia, also owed its importance to its geographical location. The harbor of Iader lay between the city, which was built on a peninsula, and the mainland. As in the case of Senia, Italian settlers formed an important segment of the population and almost naturally dominated the city's upper class. Among the many inscriptions from Iader, only one is relevant to our topic. It is an undated votive inscription now incorporated into one of the walls of the museum in Zadar. Isis and Sarapis are depicted on the right hand side of the inscription.

> Text:
> Isidi Serapi Liber[o] | Liberae uoto | suscepto pro salute | Scapulae filii sui | [5] P. Quinctius Paris | s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[75]
>
> Translation:
> To Isis and Serapis, Liber and Libera, P. Quinctius Paris having undertaken a vow for the well-being of his son Scapula gladly and deservedly fulfilled his vow

If P. Quinctius Paris, a man of Greek origin, was a freedman of the knight T. Quinctius Scapula, then this inscription falls into the late first century BCE[76]. This votive inscription would then be the earliest one in Dalmatia mentioning Isis and Sarapis. Liber and Libera were, like Isis and Sarapis, a pair of deities closely related to fertility. Various reasons might explain the combination of the originally Egyptian with the Italian pair. Besides a common feature and the need to address deities thought capable of bringing about the desired healing, there was, if the dating and identification is accepted, in Paris' case the motivation to emphasize his bond with the Roman cultural sphere.

While inscriptions to Isis and Sarapis from highly Romanized coastal towns or provincial capitals are not surprising, inscriptions from remote and isolated areas are unforeseen treasures that help refine the picture. The inscriptions from the so-called *municipium S* and Čačak fall into this category. Wilkes identified the *municipium*

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[75] *SIRIS* 676 = *CIL* III 2903 = *ILS* 4379.

[76] On the name Alföldy (1969), 114, on Quinctius Scapula *RE* 47.2 (Stuttgart, 1963), 1102, no. 53.

S as the *statio beneficiariorum* Splonum near Plevlje in eastern Dalmatia, which is still a remote area even today and is "isolated from the rest of the interior[77]." Romans and inhabitants of the southeast were attracted to Splonum because of its deposits of lead and brown coal.

Text:
Serapidi| et Isidi M.| Ulp(ius) Gellia|nus eq(ues) R(omanus)|[5] cur(a-tor) Arben|si(um) Metlensi(um)| Splonista(rum)| Maluesati(um)[78]

Translation:
To Serapis and Isis, M. Ulpius Gellianus, Roman knight and commissioner of the Arbensies, Metlensies, Splonistae, and Malvesaties

To Wilkes M. Ulpius Gellianus was "the only immigrant from abroad" whose "dedication to the eastern deities Serapis and Isis suggests he was an immigrant from one of the oriental provinces[79]." This conclusion seems hasty, particularly since oriental descent was no precondition for a person to have an interest in Isis and Sarapis. Secondly, the *cognomen* Gellianus strongly suggests Italic background[80]. It seems more likely that Gellianus' field of activity, his administrative background and his working in a mining district influenced his choice and brought about a dedication to Isis and Sarapis on a limestone altar.

Čačak in the Morava valley was a frontier station adjacent to Moesia superior. An auxiliary garrison was stationed among the native Scordisci. The inscription on a white marble altar, whose lower part is missing, is evidence that carriers of Romanization would put up altars for Isis and Sarapis even in the remotest areas.

Text:
Serapi et Isidi| Cn. Pomp(eius)| Politianus| trib(unus) coh(ortis) II ...[81]

Translation:
To Serapis and Isis, Cn. Pompeius Politianus, tribune of the *cohors* II ...

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[77] Wilkes (1969), 281.

[78] *SIRIS* 679.

[79] Wilkes (1969), 282.

[80] Alföldy (1969), 147 and I. Kajanto *The Latin Cognomina, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum* 36.2 (Helsinki, 1965), 210.

[81] *SIRIS* 679a.

The name Pompeius was often used in Celtic areas. In Dalmatia, however, it was also a name used by people originating in the eastern part of the empire. In addition, as Alföldy has determined, the name does not occur before the mid second century[82], which serves in our case as a *terminus post quem* for the dating of the inscription.

In both cases the dedicators were part of Rome's administrative and control structure in the provinces and can be considered carriers of Romanization. In both inscriptions Sarapis is mentioned before Isis, which constitutes an inversion of the usual configuration. This pattern is repeated nowhere else and suggests a common source. The second century has been given as a possible date range for the inscription from Splonum, while the one from Čačak remained, until now, undated.

Not much can be said about the funeral inscription from Narona, adorned by two incised *sistra*, except that the *sistra* function as iconographical symbols for the *di manes* for which there was no original Roman image. This also means that Isiac symbols had been integrated into the Roman stock of available religious symbols.

Text:
D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum)| L. Magn(o)| Uictor(i)| .Cluenti|[5] - Corneli| - on servo[83]

Translation:
Consecrated to the gods of the underworld, L. Magnus Victor .Cluenti - Corneli- slave

2.1.1) Summary

Three of the six inscriptions from Dalmatia come from harbor cities that had belonged to the Greek sphere of interest before coming under Roman control. They possessed Roman colonial status by the time of Augustus and can be considered highly urbanized and Romanized. In two of the three inscriptions, the very elaborate inscription from Salona and the short one from Senia, Sarapis appears alone. The inscription from Salona attests the existence of a *collegium Sarapidis Salonitanum*. Shipowners or men involved in seafaring most likely constituted the body of this association. These men, however, did not have to be cult initiates. Neither the existence

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[82] Alföldy (1969), 111. On the *cognomen* Politianus see Kajanto (1965), 717.
[83] *SIRIS* 678 = *CIL* III 1864.

of such a *collegium* nor the presence of cult initiates in Salona, as the representation of a boy with a so-called Horus lock on a sarcophagus might suggest, necessarily required the existence of an *Iseum*.

The two inscriptions from the Dalmatian frontier, addressing the two deities, exemplify that carriers of Romanization did not necessarily have to put up dedications to original Roman gods and that Isis and Sarapis were accepted deities of the Roman pantheon. Regarding the ethnic origin of the dedicators, it can be noted that the majority are, although Romanized, still discernible as non-Roman.

2.2) Pannonia superior

Pannonia superior has yielded eighteen Isiac inscriptions of which seven alone come from Poetovio (Ptuj). Three come from Savaria (Szombathely), the center of the provincial cult, two each from Carnuntum (Petronell - Deutsch-Altenburg), Vindobona (Vienna), and Siscia (Sisak), and one each from Emona (Ljubljana) and Scarbantia (Sopron). Two of the Poetovian inscriptions, which are lost, are connected with each other and could be placed in the time of Antoninus Pius' reign. The first one, a votive inscription, is also of interest because it provides some information about the *portorium* system.

The *publicum portorium Illyrici* encompassed all the Danubian provinces. The administrative headquarters of this customs organisation was Poetovio. Consequently, its status, its economy, the composition of its population, and the degree of exposure to extra-regional influences were quite different from other cities. Poetovio, because of its distinct and central position, played an important role in the propagation of the cult of Isis and Sarapis, but Aquileia was the initial link between Italy and Pannonia. The earliest inscription from Pannonia superior mentioning Isis makes this clear. Its dedicator, a high city official of Savaria, was related to the Aquileian Barbii[84].

Highly educated slaves formed the largest employee group of the *portorium* organization. These slaves were considered *peregrini*, a legal status they shared with the majority of provincial inhabitants. The level of education, their leading administrative function, and their economic status, however, set them apart. This factor could easily have played a role in a person's interest in a cult that was not at all based, as Rome's state religion was, on social status.

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[84] J. Šašel, "Barbii," *Eirene* 5 (1966), 117-37.

Text:
Isidi| Aug(ustae)| sacrum| Marti|[5]alis| Firmini| Q. Sabini| Uerani| t(ertiae?) p(artis?)|[10] conduc(toris)| portori| Illyrici| ar[k]ari uic(arius)| uoto|[15] suscepto| d(onum) d(at)| sac(erdotibus) T. Fl(auio)| Martiale| et Fl(auio) Marul|[20]lino fil(io)[85]

Translation:
Consecrated to Isis the venerated one, Martialis, the substitute of Firminus, the treasurer of Q. Sabinus Veranus, the leaseholder of one third of the Illyrian customs stations, having undertaken a vow gave this as a present to the priests T. Flavius Martialis and Flavius Marullinus, the son of Titus

Martialis' consecration to Isis leaves no doubt that the city possessed an *Iseum*. The mention of two priests does not mean that the leading priesthood was hereditary and father and son held the position jointly. Hereditary priesthoods were known in Egypt and Greece but were not at all common in Rome. This inscription would be the only evidence for such a practice. It could be that this custom was exercised in Poetovio. It should, however, be remembered that the cult had only one high priest while several others took care of the various cult objects, carried the sacred cow and wore the mask of Anubis. As Lucius in the *Metamorphoses* found out, there was more than just one priest and one initiation.

If we use their *cognomina* as the basis for this hypothesis, the place of origin of the two priests has to be sought in the area of northwestern Italy[86]. The fact that the inscriptions from Pannonia fall into two distinct territorial, chronological, and contextual groups supports this assumption. The inscriptions from western Pannonia and those along the Sava and Amber Road have been dated as coming from the first to the second century CE. This dedication belongs to this group. The inscriptions from the *limes* region, however, have been placed in the time of the Severi. The early inscriptions, addressing in most cases Isis, are expressions of personal devotion. The dedications from the border, on the other hand, invoke Sarapis predominantly and ask for the well-being of the emperor. I. Tóth has shown that the reason for this dichotomy is to be sought in the different social and historical backgrounds of these

[85] *SIRIS* 654 = *CIL* III 4015.

[86] Martialis occurs everywhere in western Italy, Marullinus, on the other hand is better known in Celtic provinces and only sporadically in Italy. See Alföldy (1969), 240.

regions[87]. The introduction of the cult of Isis and Sarapis depended on a high degree of direct Italian influence, rooted in an economic interest, which did not touch the military and civilian settlements along the *limes* in the period of the cult's initial introduction into the province. At this time Isis and Sarapis were not yet connected with the cult of the emperor. When the civilian settlements along the *limes* experienced an economic boom and subsequent urbanization toward the end of the second century CE, the orginally Egyptian gods had been fully associated with the cult of the emperor. Thus, it is hardly surprising that military men put up dedications addressing Sarapis while asking, for example, for the well-being of an emperor.

The second inscription from Poetovio, dedicated to a slave of Q. Sabinus Veranus, allows the assumption that Isis was the patroness of Veranus' enterprise. Whether he or his employees were initiates cannot be established, even though the previous inscription might lead to such a conclusion. The employment of the epithet *myrionyma* instead of the most frequently used *augusta* is only a variation.

Text:
[Is]idi| [my]rio|[ny]mae| [pro] Fructo|[5] [Sabi]ni| Uerani| [co]nduc-t(oris)| ---[88]

Translation:
To Isis of countless names for Fructus belonging to the leaseholder Sabinius Veranus

Another inscription from Poetovio proves once more that not only slaves or members of the lower social classes invoked Isis or Sarapis. C. Ulpius Aurelius Gaianus, *praefectus uehicolorum*[89] and maybe *iuridicus Alexandreae* in 167[90], put up a votive inscription on a marble tablet to the victorious Isis and Sarapis. The epithet *uictrix* designating Isis is rare and this is the only occurrence for the Danubian provinces[91]. While the position as judicial functionary in Alexandria might have roused Gaianus' interest in the Alexandrian deities, it is still possible that he encountered them elsewhere.

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[87] "Eine Doppelheit der Geschichte des Isis- und Sarapiskultes in Pannonien," *Az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Ókori Történeti Tanszékeinek Kiadványai* 9, *Studia Aegyptiaca* 1 (1974), 345-60.

[88] *SIRIS* 656 = *CIL* III 4017.

[89] *CIL* III 4802 and V 5797.

[90] *ILS* 4193; P. Meyer, "Zur Chronologie der *praefecti Aegypti* im zweiten Jahrhundert," *Hermes* 32 (1897), 226, n. 2 = *PIR*, 458, no. 533.

[91] *SIRIS* 474, 479, 588 (Italy) and 743 (Gaul).

Text:
C. Ul(pius) Aur(elius) | Gaianu[s] | I(sidi) u(ictrici) et Ser(api) | pro salu[t(e) | [5] s]ua suorum[q(ue)] | omnium | u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[92]

Translation:
C. Ulpius Aurelius Gaianus gladly and deservedly fulfilled his vow to the victorious Isis and Serapis for his own well-being and that of his whole family

Since Poetovio was the principal location of the *portorium Illyrici* and thus an important economic center, the appearance of a votive inscription by a bookkeeper in imperial service is not unexpected. Hoffiller and Saria dated the inscription found on a white marble altar to the period after Commodus[93]. Considering the suggested timeframe and the fact that Sarapis alone is addressed, which constitutes an exception among the inscriptions from Poetovio, it could well be that Epaphroditus and Alexander served in the imperial administration during the Severan period. The depiction of a palm twig on the left side of the framed inscription and a *caduceus* on the right side might suggest that the dedicator, the slave Epaphroditus, was an Isiac[94].

Text:
Serapi | Aug(usto) | sacrum | Epaphroditus | [5] Alexandri | Aug(usti) disp(ensatoris) | tabul(arius) | u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[95]

Translation:
Consecrated to Serapis the venerable one, Epaphroditus, the bookkeeper of the imperial financial administrator Alexander, gladly and deservedly fulfilled his vow

The lost votive inscription of a certain Victorinus, placed on the base of the statue he dedicated, does not provide any additional information about the cult and its deities or the people attracted to them.

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[92] *SIRIS* 660 = *AE* 1937, 245.

[93] V. Hoffiller and B. Saria *Antike Inschriften aus Jugoslawien*, vol. 1 (Zagreb, 1938), no. 336.

[94] Apuleius' account of the Isiac procession, *Met.* 11.10, where he describes the third priest carrying a palm tree with golden leaves (*palma auro foliata*) and the wand of Mercury (*Mercuriale caduceum*). These symbols might also indicate the level of initiation.

[95] *SIRIS* 657 = *CIL* 4044.

Text:
Isidi| Aug(ustae)| signum cum bas(i)| Uictorin(us)|[5] ex uoto| posuit[96]

Translation:
According his given vow, Victorinus put up a statue for Isis the venerated one with a base

Bronze tags were personal, private, and inexpensive testimonies of a fulfilled vow. Two of them have been found in Poetovio. The dedicator of one was a man of Greek origin; the other, a Roman. Besides this, these votive tags do not reveal anything more.

Text:
Apolinar(is)| Isid(i) u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[97]

Translation:
Apolinaris gladly and deservedly fulfilled his vow to Isis

The right half of the second tag is missing altogether.

Text:
Is[idi]| Ual(erius) A[.....]| P. M.....[98]

Translation:
To Isis, Valerius A[.....]

While one can assume that a *cognomen* followed after Valerius, the second half seems to defy any supplementation. Hoffiller and Saria provided with the augmentation P(ublius) M[.....] a possibility, which, unfortunately, does not lead any further[99]. If we follow Vidman's suggestion, the second name has to be placed in the dative and not in the nominative case.

Two inscriptions on bronze tags come from Siscia, which served as a naval and customs station[100]. One is on a small limestone altar, decorated on the left side with the depiction of a grape-vine and on the right side with an illustration of Sothis. *Isi* (dative singular) is an exceptional occurrence among the inscriptions consid-

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[96] *SIRIS* 655 = *CIL* III 4016.

[97] *SIRIS* 658 = *CIL* III 15184.

[98] *SIRIS* 659.

[99] Hoffiller & Saria (1938), no. 271.

[100] Mócsy (1959), 25-6.

ered in this study. It appears more commonly in inscriptions from the Italian peninsula, most repeatedly in Etruria and Cisalpine Gaul.

Text:
Isi| Aug(ustae)| P. Antoni ---|....|[101]

Translation:
To Isis the venerated one, P. Antoni(nus?)...

Another inscription from Siscia[102] sheds some light on Volcenia Maxima, the dedicator of the second bronze tag found in Siscia. The dedicators of this inscription are C. Volcenius Lupercus and Valeria Saturnia and their addressee, Liber Pater. Although the exact relation between Maxima and Lupercus cannot be determined, it seems safe to say that they come from the same family (Volcenii), which seems to have embraced fertility gods.

Text:
Isidi Aug(ustae)| sac(rum) Uol(cenia)| Maxima| ex ui(su) uo(tum) so(luit) l(aeta) l(ibens)| m(erito)[103]

Translation:
To Isis the venerated one, Volcenia Maxima happily, gladly, and deservedly fulfilled her vow on the grounds of a supernatural manifestation

From Emona, a veteran colony after the removal of the *legio XV Apollinaris* to Carnuntum, comes a dedication to Sarapis. The inscription is lost and unfortunately too deficient for useful information beyond a possible date range. The use of a *cognomen* as *nomen* puts this inscription into the third century[104].

Text:
Serapi| Iustus|... N ...[105]

Translation:
To Serapis, Justus ... N ...

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[101] *SIRIS* 652 = *CIL* III 3944.

[102] Hoffiller & Saria (1938), no. 531 with reference to their no. 541 = *CIL* III 3956 = 10834.

[103] *SIRIS* 653.

[104] W. Schulze *Zur Geschichte lateinischer Eigennamen* (Berlin, 1904), 487-521 and E. Fraenkel, "Namenwesen." *RE* 32.2 (Stuttgart, 1935), 1662-4.

[105] *SIRIS* 651 = *CIL* III 3842.

Savaria was a Claudian military colony founded around 43 when Claudius settled veterans of the *legio XV Apollinaris* in a soft valley shaped by the Perint and Gyöngyös creeks on the so-called Amber Road[106]. Savaria attracted Italian merchants since its founding, especially after Carnuntum had become the base of a legion. Given this background it is not surprising that *Italici* formed the politically most important segment of the city's population. Besides the Amber Road, three other roads running east turned Savaria into an important mercantile traffic intersection with a customs station[107]. Two roads led to Aquincum (Budapest), the provincial city of Pannonia superior. One, along the Danube, reached Aquincum by way of Arrabona (Györ) and Brigetio (Ószöny); the other, via Mogentiana (Somlyóvásárhely). The third road led south over Sopianae (Pécs) and Mursa (Osijek) to Sirmium (Mitrovica), and from there an eastward road led to Dacia.

The local economy, based on farming and various crafts, helped advance Savaria as one of the most important cities of western Pannonia. While Carnuntum was the provincial capital of Pannonia superior and the seat of the Roman administration, Savaria, as several inscriptions imply[108], was the site of the *ara Augustorum prouinciae*. The provincial elite met here in the beginning of each year to confirm their loyalty to the emperor and Rome and to formulate their interests. The reason for the choice of Savaria as a place for the provincial *concilium* might lie in the fact that hardly any indigenous people inhabited Carnuntum[109] and those who lived in the area, the Boii, formed their own independent *ciuitas*.

Excavations in the mid 1950's led to the discovery of an *Iseum*[110]. This construction, in connection with an inscription dedicated to generic *numina* by 88 persons from Savaria, grouped into five *curiae*[111], has been placed in the year 188. According to Szentléleky, these people, headed by two presidents and a priest, formed a *collegium Isidis*[112]. The only explanation for the choice of

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[106] This road led from Aquileia over Emona and Poetovia to Savaria.

[107] *CIL* III 4155, 4161, 10876.

[108] *CIL* III 3170, 4153, 4194, and 4196.

[109] Mócsy 1959), 49-53.

[110] T. Szentléleky *A szombathelyi Isis-szentély* (Szombathely, 1965) and "Az Iseum jelentösége Savariában," *Savaria* (Bulletin der Museen des Komitates Vas) 1965, 147-53 (Hungarian) and 153-8 (German).

[111] *CIL* 4150.

[112] Szentléleky (1965), 154-7.

numina is that the inscription stood in the temple of Isis and everybody knew the connection. On the frieze Victoria, Mars, Hercules (apparently having the features of Commodus), Osiris, Isis sitting on Sothis, Horus, and Anubis were depicted. Szentléleky explained the combination of these various deities as a sign of gratitude to Commodus, who at the time of the temple's construction stayed in Pannonia and may even have visited the city[113]. Arnouphis' rain miracle, having taken place in the 170's, seems more likely to be the initial motivation to build a large *Iseum*[114] than Commodus' stay in the province. This temple, like its Roman counterpart, the *Iseum Campense*, stood outside the city's *pomerium*[115].

The discovery of a marble altar with a consecration to Isis in the temple area, previous to the large scale excavation, suggests, since the inscription has been dated as belonging in first century, that this tract had already been assigned to Isis or an equivalent deity[116].

> Text:
> Isidi Au[g(ustae)] | sacr(um) | Ti. Barbiu[s] | Ti. fil(ius) Ue[l(ina)] Ualen[s] | dec(urio) c(oloniae) C(laudiae) S[auariae] | quaest[or | I]Iuir i(ure) di[c(endo) | p]onti[fex][117]
>
> Translation:
> Consecrated to Isis the venerated one, Ti. Barbius Valens son of Tiberius assigned to the tribe Velina *decurio* of the Claudian colony Savaria, *quaestor*, *duumvir iure dicendo*, and *pontifex*

The *gens Barbia* originated in central Italy but, with the founding of a Latin colony at Aquileia in 181 BCE, this city, the capital of *Uenetia et Istria*, became the family's operational base. The Barbii, possessing business acumen and a strong sense of family belonging, built a trade network that reached into Noricum and Pannonia. According to Šašel[118], the infrequently appearing Tiberii-Barbii

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[113] Szentléleky (1965), 157.

[114] Its area was 70m x 40m.

[115] The temple was built on an originally swampy location similar, insofar as the delta region of Egypt and western Hungary can be compared, to the Canopis, where the large *Iseum* of Alexandria stood.

[116] Szentléleky (1965), 155: "Auf noch frühere Spuren verweisen die in den untersten Schichten gefundenen Hüttenreste und Wandgemälde-Bruchstücke, diese allein genügen aber nicht für die Annahme, dass das Gebiet des Heiligtums bereits zu dieser Zeit den Zwecken des Isis-Kults diente."

[117] *SIRIS* 661 = *CIL* III 4156.

[118] Šašel (1966), 117-37.

must have belonged to an older Aquileian *stirps* that furnished the first colonists to settle Emona. This branch of the family flourished in the Late Republic and died out in the course of the second century[119]. Place of origin, the family's profession and its dependence on *Fortuna* might have been decisive for Valens' interest in Isis. The true reasons, however, remain unknown. In addition, it seems exaggerated to see in him the first propagator of Egyptian cults in the area[120], for a donation of an altar does not bring 'to life' a congregation and the rituals over which *sacerdotes* presided.

It is certainly unfortunate that the building inscription of the *Iseum*, placed between two representations of Victoria, cannot yield any further information.

Text:
[Isidi] sac(rum)|---E---[121]

Translation:
Consecrated to Isis ---E---

The final epigraphic evidence from Savaria is an inscription on a limestone statuary base. A crown with a ribbon is depicted on the left side, which is heavily damaged, and a barely recognizeable figure, a naked child, probably Horus (Harpocrates), embellishes the right side. Below the figure's feet is a hemisphere and further down, the head of Anubis turned toward the left. The usual interpretation of this head had been that of an Anubis mask[122]. I. Tóth convincingly argued that Horus, Anubis, and Osiris were depicted on the base and a statue of Isis completed the artistic composition[123].

Text:
[I]sid[i]| Aug(ustae) sa[c(rum)]| Q. Iuliu[s]| [M]oderat(us)|[5] [Q. (*uel* et) I]ulius| [B]ellic(us) [s|ace]rd[o|tes] ---[124]

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[119] Šašel (1966), 137.

[120] See V. Wessetzky *Die ägyptischen Kulte in Ungarn, EPRO* 1 (Leiden, 1961), 25.

[121] *SIRIS* 663.

[122] Wessetzky (1961), 27, for example, saw it as a symbol for initiation and the cult itself. Discussion of this statuary base pp. 25-8.

[123] I. Tóth, "Ein 'Viergötterstein' mit ägyptischen Göttern aus Savaria (ad *CIL* III 10908 = *SIRIS* 662)," *Az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Ókori Történeti Tanszékeinek Kiadványai* 21, *Studia Aegyptiaca* 3 (1977), 131-48.

[124] Tóth (1977), 132-4. Different reading *SIRIS* 662 = *CIL* III 10908: [I]sidi| Aug(ustae) sa[c(rum)]| Q. Iulius| [M]oderat[us|[5] I]ulius| [Nig]ellio| [sace]rd[o|-tes].

Translation:
Consecrated to Isis the venerated one, the priests Quintus Julius Moderatus, Quintus (*or* and) Julius Bellicus ---

The priests might have been relatives, maybe brothers or a father-son pair. But then again the *nomen* Julius is very common. The date range of this inscription coincides with the one from Poetovio[125], in which a father and a son were listed as priests, but this does not prove the same relationship for these two men.

Scarbantia (Sopron) on the Neusiedler See in the territory of the *ciuitas Boiorum* lay on the way to the provincial capital Carnuntum. Veterans and traders formed the largest segment of the town's population. There a votive inscription to Isis and Bubastis has been found on a limestone altar. Engraved on the left side is Isis-Hathor and on the cow's side a moon sickle is depicted[126]. The dedicator was a man from the eastern parts of the empire, maybe an Egyptian. Bubastis, the cat-headed goddess, was associated with Isis early on and could appear in the company of other Egyptian gods. In Latin inscriptions, however, she appears only once more together with Isis[127] and does not even surface in connection with other Egyptian deities[128].

Text:
Isidi Aug(ustae) | et Bubasti | G. P(omponius) Philinus | Pomponi |[5] Seueri | lib(ertus) u(otum) s(oluit)[129]

Translation:
To Isis the venerated one and Bubastis, G. Pomponius Philinus the freedman of Pomponius Severus fulfilled his vow

Two inscriptions come from Carnuntum, the provincial capital of Pannonia superior and military base for one legion. The population of the city consisted primarily of veterans and *negotiatores*. Hadrian advanced the civil settlement to a *municipium* and Septimius Severus promoted it to a *colonia*. The first inscription, on a small sandstone altar, was found in the amphitheater. Carved water vessels decorate the left and right side as well as the top. Since altars were put up in

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[125] *SIRIS* 654 = *CIL* 4015.

[126] Wessetzky (1961), 38-40, detailed description.

[127] *SIRIS* 534 = *CIL* XIV 21 = *ILS* 4373.

[128] In Greek inscriptions Bubastis occurs alone, with Osiris or Anubis *SIRIS* 92, 173, CE 200, 201.

[129] *SIRIS* 664 = *CIL* III 4234.

amphitheaters, the place of discovery is not as extraordinary as one might think. The inscription itself is too short to provide any information about the dedicator. It should be noted that the association of Jupiter with Sarapis was hardly used[130].

Text:
[I]oui| Serap[i| I]ulius[131]

Translation:
To Jupiter Serapis, Julius

The second inscription on a sandstone altar was found in the baths of Carnuntum. The importance of water, especially in the healing process, and the connection with Isis and Sarapis has already been mentioned. The wife of the dedicator, whose name had been erased, could have been the sister of Maesius Fabius Titianus[132].

Text:
Serapi conser|uatori et Isidi ceterisq(ue) dis de|abusq(ue) immortali-
b(us)|[5] [[line 5-6 and part of 7 erased]] u(otum) s(oluit) p() a()
s()[133]| cum Fabia Ti|tiana uxore|[10] et Titiano| filio[134]

Translation:
To Serapis the savior and Isis and the other immortal gods and goddesses, (dedicator's name erased) fulfilled his vow (...) with his wife Fabia Titiana and his son Titianus

The military background of Vindobona and the policy of Septimius Severus and his son in associating themselves with deities to further and strengthen their sociopolitical position explains the content of the two inscriptions found in Austria's capital. The *ala Flauia Domitiana Augusta Britannica* first garrisoned the city. Trajan replaced the *ala* with the *legio XIII gemina*. When this legion was moved to Dacia, the *legio XIV gemina Martia uictrix* took its place. Toward the end of Trajan's reign, the *legio X gemina* from Aquincum replaced it and

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[130] Four more occurrences are recorded. One from Aquincum, *SIRIS* 673, and three from Italy, Britain, and Numidia, *SIRIS* 533, 751, and 783.

[131] *SIRIS* 665 = *CIL* III 11141.

[132] M. Fuss, *RE* 27.2 (Stuttgart, 1928), 283, no. 1. Is the *cognomen* Titianus Eraviscan? An altar dedicated by Titianus, an augur of the Eravisci, from 247 has been found in the Celtic sanctuary on the Gellért-Hill (Budapest).

[133] Suggested supplements for the three letters: p(ius) a(nimo) s(oluit), p(raefectus) a(lae) s(agittariorum), and u(otum) s(oluit) p(ius) a(nimo) s().

[134] *SIRIS* 666 = *CIL* III 11157.

stayed there permanently. Vindobona was also the port of the *classis Histrica*. The military tribune of the *legio X gemina* dedicated two inscriptions to *Iuppiter optimus maximus Sarapis* for the well-being of Septimius Severus sometime between 198 and 209. The first inscription was placed on a bronze plaque. There is no information about the lost second inscription, which, judging from the content, must have been placed in close proximity to the longer one.

Text:
I(oui) o(ptimo) m(aximo) Sarapid(i) pro sal(ute)| im<p(eratoris)>| L. Septimii Seueri Pii| Pertinacis Aug(usti) Arabici| Adiaben(ici) Parthici Maxi|[5]mi et imp(eratoris) M. Aurelii| Antonini Aug(usti) Fl(auius) Quirin|alis Maximus trib(unus) mil(itum) leg(ionis) X ge{r}-m(inae) p(iae) f(idelis) u(otum)| s(oluit) l(aetus) l(ibens) m(erito)[135]

Translation:
To Jupiter the best and greatest Sarapis for the well-being of the Imperator L. Septimius Severus Pius Pertinax Augustus Arabicus Adiabenicus Parthicus Maximus Augustus and the Imperator M. Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, Flavius Quirinalis Maximus, military tribune of the *legio X gemina pia fidelis* happily, gladly, and deservedly fulfilled his vow

Text:
I(oui) o(ptimo) m(aximo)| Sarapidi| idem| Maximus[136]

Translation:
To Jupiter the best and greatest Sarapis the same Maximus

2.2.1) Summary

Poetovio was the administrative center of the *publicum portorium Illyrici* and economically the most important city of the province. It is not surprising that seven of the eighteen inscriptions come from here. The city, as an inscription reveals, possessed an *Iseum*. The datable inscriptions fall into the second century, which was empire-wide a time of increased interest in the cult and its deities. The epigraphic data suggests that the dedicators were all men, had various ethnic backgrounds and belonged to different social groups. Two, working for the same leaseholder, were involved in the collection of customs duties, and one worked as bookkeeper in the imperial

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[135] *SIRIS* 667 = *CIL* III 4560.
[136] *SIRIS* 668 = *CIL* III 4561.

administration. C. Ulpius Aurelius Gaianus, *praefectus uehiculorum*, was the most prominent dedicator. All four men were associated with the administration of the economic sector.

Although the geographic position of Emona (it lay at the intersection of the Amber Road and the road along the Sava) seems an ideal spot for a large Isiac congregation, the single inscription addressed to Sarapis suggests otherwise. The two inscriptions from Siscia attest that individuals worshipped Isis, but, as in the case of Emona, this town on the Sava does not stand out as a regional center of worship. These two southern cities, just like the city north of Savaria, Scarbantia which yielded one inscription, could not rival the administrative, political, or economic importance of Poetovio and Savaria. In the case of Carnuntum and Vindobona, cities with a predominantly military background, the urban development came much later and at a time during which Isis and Sarapis were detached from their cultic context. The most important cultic festival, the *nauigium Isidis*, had been transformed into a Roman New Year's festival and the emperors increasingly employed Sarapis for political purposes. Such cities did not have *Isea*. The epigraphic evidence from Carnuntum and Vindobona nicely highlights all of this.

2.3) Pannonia inferior

Four inscriptions which mention the names Isis and/or Sarapis have been found so far in Pannonia inferior. They come from Aquincum (Budapest), Csév[137], Crumerum (Nyersgesújfalu[138]), and Intercisa (Dunaújváros). Two additional inscriptions found their way into Vidman's *Sylloge*, one from Aquincum and another from Solva (Esztergom), although neither invoke Isis or Sarapis. The first one was included because of its representation of two deities that have been interpreted to represent Isis and Sarapis. They could, however, easily be interpreted as a representation of Proserpina and Pluto or an equivalent Celtic pair of gods[139]. The second is an altar dedicated to *regina* dated around 230. The altar does not have any decoration and since Juno, for example, was also addressed as *regina*, it is far from safe to assume that its dedicator Aurelius Respectus meant Isis[140].

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[137] Located between Brigetio and Aquincum.

[138] About the same distance west of Esztergom as Brigetio is east of Esztergom.

[139] *SIRIS* 672 = *CIL* III 14343: M. P(ublicius?) Siluanus p(osuit).

[140] *SIRIS* 671 = *CIL* III 10594: "Regine| Aur(elius) Respectus| uet(eranus) leg(ionis) II ad(iutricis) p(iae) f(idelis)| ex uoto posuit|5 [a]r[a]m| Agricola| et

In the process of consolidating the northern border and securing it from barbarian attacks, the Romans advancing along the Danube came into contact with the *Erauisci*. This Celtic tribe, pushed out of Northern Italy in the early second century BCE, settled in Moravia and then, pressured by incoming Germanic tribes, established themselves in the area between the eastern side of Lake Balaton and the knee of the Danube down to the area around Intercisa. The appearance of the Roman army in this area brought a renewed resettlement and, for those Eravisci staying behind, steady Romanization and adaptation to the Roman way of life.

From the time of Claudius, three *alae* occupied and protected the area around Aquincum. Then, with Trajanic expansion, the *legio II adiutrix* took up permanent residence. As a result of this placement, the stretch of the Danube flowing eastward from Vindobona to Aquincum was protected by legions. Together with the six *alae* and sixteen *cohortes*, Pannonia was not only protected but also served as the military base and resource for the annexation of territories farther east. The presence of a military camp quickly attracted civilians, natives and foreigners alike. Aquincum's civilian settlement, *canabae*, received municipal status under Hadrian and was advanced to a *colonia* under Septimius Severus.

In contrast to Savaria, the small number of Egyptian or Egyptianizing art objects found so far in Aquincum[141] indicates that the worship of the two deities was a personal and not a public affair. The placing of altars and votive tablets does not contradict this. Even altars put up in public as an expression of personal conviction, restitution, or general appeal could stand in temples of other deities that were related to Isis and Sarapis only in character but not in cultic performance. Another explanation is that they simply stood on private property.

Atius Euhemerus, the dedicator of a votive table from Aquincum, was of Greek descent. On this table, Isis and Sarapis are depicted sitting above the inscription. On the right is Mercurius, the Roman equivalent of Toth, and between him and Sarapis, Cerberus. On the left side of Isis is a priest. The whole scene hints at the passage from life to death.

Clementino| co(n)s(ulibus)." His name appears also on a funeral inscription *CIL* III 3627 = 10569.

[141] Wessetzky (1961), 6-20 and A. Dobrovits, "Az Egyiptomi kultuszok emlékei Aquincumban," *Budapest Régiségei* 13 (1943), 47-75 (english summary ("The Cult of the Egyptian Gods in Aquincum"), 494-7).

Text:
[Ioui? Sera]pi uot(um) f(ecit) lib(ens) Atius Eu[he]merus[142]

Translation:
[To Jupiter? Sera]pis, Atius Euhemerus gave his vow gladly

The combination *Iuppiter Sarapis*, if the supplement is accepted, was, as mentioned above, seldom employed[143].

The inscription from Csév and the one from Crumerum were endowed for the well-being of the emperor Antoninus Caracalla on the way to Dacia in 214. The altar from Csév was a dedication of Alfenus Avitianus, legate of Pannonia inferior.

Text:
Ioui optimo [max(imo)] | Neptuno Serap[idi] | pro salut[e et] uictor[ia] | et perpetuitate |[5] [i]mp(eratoris) Caesaris | [M. A]urel(ii) [[Antonini]] | [Pii] Felicis Aug(usti) | [Alf]enus Auitianus | [leg(atus)] eius pr(o) pr(aetore) |[10] prou(inciae) Pann(oniae) inf(erioris)[144]

Translation:
To Jupiter the best and greatest, Neptune, and Serapis for the well-being and victory and perpetuity of the Imperator Caesar M. Aurelius Antoninus, the pious and blessed Augustus, Alfenus Avitianus, his legate *pro praetore* of the province of Pannonia inferior

Avitianus' inscription begins in the traditional pattern with Jupiter, Rome's prime deity, followed by Neptune, whose incorporation can be attributed to the closeness of the Danube, the most important waterway and supply line to the east. The inclusion of Sarapis happened for two reasons independent of the fact that he could be 'identified' with Jupiter and Neptune. First, there was the emperor's interest in Sarapis, which was certainly known to Avitianus. Second, Sarapis was, among other things, a healer god and protector of shipping and in these categories much more distinct than the two Roman gods.

In contrast, the inscription from Crumerum addresses the *deus inuictus* Sarapis, a combination originally reserved for Mithras. The epithet *inuictus* in combination with Sarapis occurs only eight times among all inscriptions collected by Vidman, six times together with

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[142] *SIRIS* 673.

[143] Other occurrences see discussion of *SIRIS* 665 (Carnuntum, Pannonia superior).

[144] *SIRIS* 670 = *CIL* III 3637. Wessetzky (1961), 50-2.

the noun *deus*. It was used predominantly in Rome and the Danubian provinces during the reign of Antoninus Caracalla[145].

Text:
Deo inuict[o] | Serapi pro sal(ute) | et uictoria imp(eratoris) | Caes(aris) M. Aurel(ii) | [5] Antonini [P(ii) F(elicis) Aug(usti)] | ---[146]

Translation:
To the unconquerable god Serapis for the well-being and victory of the Imperator Caesar, M. Aurelius Antoninus, the pious and blessed Augustus ---

The final inscription comes from Intercisa, a settlement that grew out of an *ala* base consisting of 500 cavalry men. Heavily damaged during the Sarmatian War (117-119), it was rebuilt by the *ala I Thracum ueterana sagittariorum*. After the Marcomannic and Sarmatian Wars, the destroyed Intercisa had to be rebuilt once more. Construction began during the reign of Commodus and was completed by the Syrian *cohors I milliaria Hemesenorum*. This unit remained until the 260's when Intercisa fell once more, this time irreversibly, into the hands of invading Germanic and Sarmatian tribes.

The Syrians brought with them, as numerous altars and votive objects indicate, *Deus Sol Elagabalus*, the god of Hemesa. M. Porcius Verus' dedication on a limestone altar belonging to the Severan period names Isis and Sarapis together with the Roman Triad. The exclusion of *Deus Sol Elagabalus* is not unusual, for their was no moral pressure forcing the commander to include the Hemesian god. In addition, Verus, as his *nomen* indicates, was not Syrian. The name Porcius appears often in Spain, the southern parts of Gaul, and Africa, but rarely anywhere else[147]. Porcius did his job or jobs well, for he advanced to become financial administrator of Noricum[148].

Text:
[I(oui) o(ptimo) m(aximo) Iunoni | reginae Mi | neruae Sera | pi]di Isid[i ce | [5]t]eris di[s] | deabusqu[e] | M. Porciu[s] | Uerus tri[b(unus)] | coh(ortis) (milliariae) Hemes(enorum) | [10] eq(uitatae) c(iuium) R(omanorum)[149]

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[145] *SIRIS* 374, 393, 407, 583, 669, 685, 700, 797.

[146] *SIRIS* 669 = *AE* 1962, 40 = *RIU* III 753.

[147] Alföldy (1969), 112.

[148] *CIL* III 5317.

[149] *SIRIS* 674.

Translation:
To Jupiter the best and greatest, the queen Juno, Minerva, Serapis, Isis and other gods and goddesses, M. Porcius Verus commander of the Roman military unit Hemesena consisting of 1000 cavalry men

2.3.1) Summary

The same historical and economic conditions are applicable for the *limes* cities in Pannonia inferior as those noted for Carnuntum and Vindobona. It is interesting that of the four inscriptions, three have been found along the *limes* stretch south-southwest of the Danube knee (Aquincum, Csév, and Crumerum). The inscription from Intercisa, whose dedicator was a *tribunus*, also falls into this category. The ones from Csév and Crumerum were of a military character connected with the emperor Antoninus Caracalla who was, at the time, involved in a war against the Dacians, while the one from the provincial capital was a personal dedication.

Moesia

1) Short Historical Survey

The homonymous grandson of M. Licinius Crassus, a master in changing sides, received Macedonia as proconsul in 29-28 BCE. He set out against the Moesi, a Thracian tribe, and defeated them[150]; hence Augustus added their subjugation to the list of his early achievements[151]. A *praefectus*, allocated to the province Macedonia or on other occasions to the Dalmatian part of Illyricum, was put in charge of the Moesi. Tiberius led the retaliation against the Scordisci, who had settled in northwestern Moesia, after they and the west Thracian Dentheletes had attacked Macedonia in 16 BCE[152]. About the same time the Dacians appeared in the valley of the Maros and in 10 BCE they attacked Pannonia[153]. Cn. Cornelius Lentulus led successful strikes against the Dacians and was thus able to

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[150] D.C. *Hist.* 51.25.1.

[151] D.C. *Hist.* 53.7.1.

[152] A. von Premerstein, "Die Anfänge der Provinz Moesien," *Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Institutes* 1 (1898), 158 and R. Syme, "Lentulus and the Origin of Moesia," *JRS* 24 (1934), 117-37.

[153] Flor. 2.28-9.

contain their sphere of influence to the northern side of the Danube[154].

A dedication[155] mentions P. Vinicius[156], who was consul in 2 CE, as the first legate of Moesia while Dio identified A. Severus Caecina[157] as the first to hold the position in the year 6 CE. Appian credited Tiberius with the organization of the province[158]. It is unfortunately impossible to establish the exact first date of a Moesian governorship with an independent army command[159]. Even the exact boundaries of the province are difficult to determine. For our purposes, however, a rough outline will suffice. The Balkan range formed the province's southern border and the area along the Lower Danube, from the river Drinus to the Black Sea, constituted its northern perimeter[160]. The governor of Moesia also controlled the Black Sea coastline to the Straits of Kertch. Around Vespasian's time there was a fleet attached to the province, the *classis Moesica*, which controlled the northern waters.

Domitian divided Moesia. The area west of the river Ciabrus (Cibrica) formed Moesia superior and extending from its eastern side lay Moesia inferior. Trajan's annexation of Dacia brought an enlargement of the two provinces. Moesia superior gained the plain between the Danuvius (Danube), the lower Parisos (Tisza) and the Maros (Marisia) while Moesia inferior was enlarged to encompass the east bank of the Aluta (Olt). Like all the other Danubian provinces Moesia superior and inferior were military borderland. This fact emphasizes that, except for the Greek cities on the Black Sea coast and Naissus (Niš) on the upper Morava (Margus), all other provincial towns grew out of Roman camps along the Danube. These were cities like Singidunum (Belgrade), Viminacium (Kostolac),

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[154] A. Mócsy, "Der vertuschte Dakerkrieg des M. Licinius Crassus," *Historia* 15 (1966), 511-4.

[155] *IGRR* I 654.

[156] His son M. Vicinius had been married to Livilla (Julia), the youngest daughter of Germanicus and Agrippina.

[157] He commanded the five Roman legions with M. Plautius Silvanus, won a battle near Sirmium in 7 CE and joined Tiberius in Siscia. Seven years later he was legate of Germania inferior.

[158] *Ill.* 30. On the difficult history of the creation of the province A. Mócsy *Gesellschaft und Romanisation in Moesia Superior* (Amsterdam and Budapest, 1970) and the earliest work von Premerstein (1898).

[159] Mócsy (1970), 48-9.

[160] On the assignment of the borders and the difficulties see Mócsy (1970), 9-16.

Ratiaria, Oescus, Novae (Čezava), Durostorum (Silistria), and Troesmis. They received colonial or municipal status during Hadrian's reign.

Tiberius had two legions stationed in Moesia[161]. The *legio V Macedonia* in Oescus and the *legio IIII Scythica*, whose base is not known but could, according to Mócsy, very well have been further inland, for example, in Dardania[162]. Claudius replaced the *legio IIII Scythica* with the *VII Claudia pia fidelis*. This legion was stationed, perhaps already from the beginning but certainly since Vespasian, at Viminacium. Vespasian moved the *legio V alaudae* and the *legio I Italica* - both had supported Vitellius - to Moesia. The latter was stationed at Novae, which after the division of the province under Domitian belonged to Mosia inferior. When the *legio V alaudae*[163] under the leadership of Cornelius Fuscus was destroyed in 86 or 87 CE in Dacia, the *legio IIII Flauia felix* took its place. Stationed at Viminacium and later possibly at Ratiaria, it was one of the first garrisons in the province Dacia, but returned to Singidunum at the time of Hadrian. There it possibly replaced the *legio II adiutrix pia fidelis*, which Domitian had moved from Britain to Moesia, and Hadrian had sent to Aquincum. The *legio V Macedonia* returned to its home base in Oescus after the First Jewish War. There it remained until Trajan's Second Dacian War, when it was moved further up the Danube to Troesmis. After the Marcomannic War the legion garrisoned the Dacian Potaissa until the abandonment of the area north of the Danube under Aurelian. At this point, the *legio V Macedonica* returned to its original home, Oescus, now a city in the newly organized province *Dacia ripensis*. The *legio XI Claudia pia fidelis* was, next to the *legio I Italica* and the *V Macedonia,* the third legion in Moesia inferior. Trajan had transferred it from Vindonissa (Germania superior) to Brigetio (Pannonia inferior) and finally to Durostorum. Five legions stationed directly along the Danube protected Moesia. At first there were three and, with the removal of the *legio II adiutrix pia felix* to Aquincum in Hadrian's time, subsequently two legions based in Moesia superior and three legions in Moesia inferior.

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[161] Tac. *Ann.* 4.5.

[162] Mócsy (1970), 49.

[163] Its camp might have been in Ratiaria. V. Velkov, "Ratiaria eine römische Stadt in Bulgarien," *Eirene* 5 (1966), 155-75.

2) Inscriptions

2.1) Moesia superior

Only two inscriptions addressing deities relevant to our study have been found in Moesia superior so far. One comes from Peć and the other from Suvi Lukavac near Peć. This area was the border zone between Dalmatia and Moesia superior. The contents of the inscriptions are confined to the name of the deity, Sarapis, and an additional epithet. Both attributes, in one case *inuictus* and in the other *conseruator*, were seldomly used[164]. Considering the provincial distribution of these epithets, one notices that they occur most often in the Danubian provinces.

Text:
Serapi| inuicto[165]

Translation:
To the unconquered Serapis

Text:
Serapi| conser|uatori[166]

Translation:
To Serapis the savior

2.1.1) Summary

The extremely meager yield of relevant inscriptions highlights the fact that urbanization and Romanization were important conditions that encouraged the introduction of the cult. Its initial introduction took place in the first to the second century, a time the urban development in Moesia superior only began to pick up speed.

2.2) Moesia inferior

Ten of the fourteen inscriptions from Moesia inferior come from the Greek-speaking Black Sea cities Dionysopolis (Balčik), Tomis (Constanţa), Histria, Tyras and Olbia. The only inscription from

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[164] On *inuictus* see *SIRIS* 669 (Crumerum, Pannonia inferior). Sarapis *conseruator*, in addition to this inscription, *SIRIS* 376 and 666.

[165] *SIRIS* 700. The altar has been discovered in Drsnik and as a date the time of L. Aurelius Antoninus (Caracalla) has provisionally been given.

[166] *SIRIS* 700a. The white marble altar is dated second to third century.

Dionysopolis, an honorary dedication on a broken marble plate, has been placed in the second half of the first century BCE.

Text:
---αι παρα---|--- τὸν ἀνέλαβε---|---ος Θεόδωρον καὶ Ἐπι---|---σαν τοῖς ἰδίοις δαπανήμασι---|[5]---ατων συναποδ[η]μῶν ἀπή[ρ]α-τ[ο---|---ει]ς Ἀργεδαυον πρὸς τὸν πατέρα α[ὐτοῦ?|--- παραγε]-νόμενος δὲ καὶ συντυχὼν ἅμα---|---ν τὴν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ κατεκτήσατο τῆ[ς δὲ|---ἀπέ]λυσεν τὸν δῆμον ἱερεύς τε γενόμεν[ος|[10]---? τοῦ Θεοῦ Με γ]άλου τάς τε πομπὰς καὶ τὰς θυσίας [ἐ|πετέλεσε λαμ-π]ρῶς καὶ τοῖς πολίταις μετέδωκεν τ[ῶν| κρεῶν τῷ τε Σαρ]άπει λαχὼν ἱερεὺς ὁμοίως τοῖς δαπ[ανή|μασιν ἀνεστράφ]η καλῶς καὶ φιλαγάθως| (lines 14-42: the enumeration of merits and the reason for the dedication are ommitted)|[43] δε[δό|[44]χθ]α[ι τῇ] βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ ἐπηνῆσθαι μὲν ἐπὶ τούτοις Ἀκορνίων[α]|[45] Διο-ν[υ]σίου καὶ στεφανωθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς Διονυσίοις χρυσ[ῷ]| στεφάνῳ καὶ εἰκόνι χαλκῇ στεφανοῦσθαι δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ εἰς τὸν λ[οι|π]ὸν χρ[όν]ον καθ' ἕκαστον ἔτος ἐν τοῖς Διονυσίοις χρυσῷ στε[φά|ν]ῳ δε[...]σθαι δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς ἀνάστασιν ἀνδριάντος τό|πον τὸν ἐπιφανέστατον τῆς ἀγορᾶς[167]

Translation:
- received --- Theodorus and Epi --- with personal expenses --- while being abroad he departed --- to Argedauos to his father --- and at the same time meeting with --- he gained for himself from him --- he set the people free, and a priest --- he splendidly executed the processions and the sacrifices of the Great God and gave a share of the meat to the citizens, chosen by lot as priest of Sarapis in the same manner regarding the expenses he turned back nicely and benevolently (enumeration of merits and reason of dedication). The council decreed and the people approved that in honor of all these things Akornio, son of Dionysios, was to be rewarded during the Dionysia a golden crown and a bronze statue and in the future (he was to receive) during the Dionysia a golden crown every year and among the statues put up in the market-place his ought to have the most prominent place

Dionysopolis' main deity, the Θεὸς *Μέγας* mentioned in the text, was Dionysus. Sarapis and Dionysus were mystery deities connected with the earth's fertility cycle and had their origins in bull form, either physically, like Sarapis, or representationally, as in the case of Dionysus. In addition, Sarapis, through his divine consort Isis, was thought a protector of seafaring, which for a harbor city and its

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[167] *SIRIS* 703 = *IGRR* I 662 = *IG Bulg* 13. Suggested readings for δε[...]σθαι are δε[δό]σθαι and δε[ίξα]σθαι(?).

inhabitants was an important quality. Considering all this, it is not surprising that Akornio, probably the most prominent citizen of Dionysopolis at the time, did not shy away from expenses which matched those for the Θεὸς *Μέγας*.

Two of the five Greek inscriptions from Tomis have been dated approximately to the first century BCE. The first one is a short votive inscription. Unfortunately, there is no description available.

Text:
Σαράπιδ[ι .....] | ος Πολυδώ[ρου] | κατὰ ὄναρ | Σινωπεύς[168]

Translation:
To Sarapis, ---os son of Polydorus from Sinope in accordance with a dream

The second inscription placed on a marble plate commemorates the construction of a sanctuary. The initial address of ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ should not surprise since the powerful Tyche, a concept originally without an iconographic representation, was associated with Isis. The henotheistic mother-goddess Isis, like Tyche and Fortuna, was thought to influence a person's fortune.

Text:
[Ἀγαθῇι τύχ]ηι· Διονύσιος Ἡδύλου ἐκ τῶν | [ἰδίων κ]ατεσκεύα-σεν διὰ το[ῦ ἱ]ε[ρέως τ]οῦ | [Διὸς Ἴσ]ιδώρου τοῦ καὶ Θεα..... [Διὶ] τῶι | [μεγάλωι] καὶ Σαράπιδι καὶ Εἴσιδι καὶ |[5] [Ἀνού]βιδι καὶ θεοῖς πᾶσιν[169]

Translation:
To good Fortune, Dionysios son of Hedylos has built this with private means through the agency of the priest of Zeus, Isidoros, and Thea..... to Zeus the Great and Sarapis and Isis and Anubis and all the gods

The addition of [Διὶ] τῶι | [μεγάλωι] is based on the fact that Isidoros was a priest of Zeus and an involvement in the construction of a temple for the Egyptian deities might have seemed inadequate. If this conjecture is accepted, the existence of a pantheistic sanctuary has to be explained. The existence of such a sanctuary, however, is unlikely for the first century BCE. Isidoros, as his name suggests, might have had an interest in the Egyptian deity whose name formed the substantial part of his personal name. Despite Malaise's statement

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[168] *SIRIS* 706.
[169] *SIRIS* 705.

that theophoric names reveal more about the religious sentiments of the parents than the person carrying the name[170], it would, if we consider the openness of the polytheistic system, not be impossible for the priest of Zeus to have been involved in the cult of Isis and Sarapis. In addition, when one considers the Egyptian deities mentioned in the inscription, the absence of the name Horus is striking. Tacheva-Hitova's suggestion of Ὥρει seems very convincing[171], especially since Horus played an important part in the cult and would certainly not be forgotten by a man who just had a temple constructed and otherwise mentioned the cult's major deities in his dedication.

Tomis' third inscription, a council decision engraved on a stele, has been dated as coming from the first century BCE to the first century CE. It proves the existence of a temple of Sarapis, and by extension all the cult-related deities, and the important political position members of the cult held in the city.

Text:
-|.λνι ---|.σδρο ---| [π]ρώτου [τῆς Ἴσι]|[5]δος τοῖς [καλου]|μένοις Χα[ρμο]|σύνοις ἀρετῆς| ἕνεκεν καὶ σω|φροσύνης· τὴν δὲ|[10] ἐπιμέλειαν τῆς| ἀναγορεύσεως| τοῦ στεφάνου ποι|[ε]ῖσθαι τοὺς προσ|[ε]δρεύοντας [τῶι ι]|[15]ερῶι· τὸ δὲ ψήφισ|μα ἐσγραφῆνα[ι]| εἰς τελαμῶνα| λευκοῦ λίθου κα[ὶ]| ἀνατεθῆναι εἰς τ[ὸ]|[20] ἱερὸν τοῦ Σαρά|πιδος[172]

Translation:
--- [4]of the first on account of virtue and moderation to the ones called 'joys' of Isis; and for those who preside over the temple to see to the proclamation of the crown. The decree is to be engraved on a base of white stone and placed next to the temple of Sarapis

A building inscription, on a fragmented marble plate, from the first century CE is of great interest. It might not be that extraordinary that Agrippina the Younger, the wife of Claudius and the mother of Nero, was labeled θεά but it is intriguing, should the restoration be accepted, that, styled in this fashion, she is mentioned in connection with Isis and Sarapis.

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[170] Malaise (1972), 29.

[171] *Eastern Cults in Moesia Inferior and Thracia, EPRO* 95 (Leiden, 1983), n. I 14.

[172] *SIRIS* 704 = *SEG* 24, 1053.

Text:
Τύ[χῃ ἀγαθῇ]· | Ὑπὲρ θεᾶς Ἀγριπ[πείνας .....|..]ενος· ἐκτη-πα...|...τικῆς ἐπιμε[λουμένου ...|[5]..... Ἀντ]ωνίου Ἀρχ[..... ἱερ-έως| Σαράπιδ]ος καὶ Ἴσιδ[ος .....| δι]ακείμεν[.....|.... πα]τρίδα φιλ.....|..... θεοῖς [...|[10]... ἐκ] τῶν [ἰδίων κατεσκεύ-ασεν][173]

Translation:
To Good Fortune. On behalf of the goddess Agrippina .....enos. (...) of Antonius Arch..... priest of Sarapis and Isis ..... caring for ..... being well disposed (...) the beloved? land of his fathers (...) built this with private means for the gods .....

A marble altar provides the final inscription from Tomis. This inscription records that Alexandrian merchants residing in the port city of Tomis formed an association, the *οἶκος τῶν Ἀλεξανδρέων*. The choice of Sarapis as the protector of this association followed primarily from the ethnic background of its members and because Sarapis was connected with shipping. The date of the inscription, March 29, 160, highlights the ethnic background once more. The first day of the Egyptian month Pharmouthis fell on March 29 and the 23rd year of T. Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus' (Antoninus Pius') reign was 160.

Text:
[Διὶ Ἡλ]ίῳ μεγάλῳ Σαράπ[ιδι| καὶ τ]οῖς συννάοις θεοῖς κ[αὶ| αὐτ]οκράτορι Τ. Αἰλίῳ Ἀδριαν[ῷ]| Ἀντωνείνῳ Σεβαστῷ εὐσε-[β(εῖ)]|[5] καὶ Μ. Αὐρηλίῳ Οὐήρῳ Καίσα|ρι Καρπίων Ἀνουβίω-νος| τῷ οἴκῳ τῶν Ἀλεξανδρέ|ων τὸν βωμὸν ἐκ τῶν ἰδί|ων ἀνέθηκεν ἔτους κγ'|[10] Φαρμουθὶ α' ἐπὶ ἱερέων| [Κ]ορνούτου τοῦ καὶ Σαραπίωνος| ....υ...μνου τοῦ καὶ Λονγ[εί|νου .....] τοῦ Αρ....[174]

Translation:
To Zeus, the great Sun, Sarapis and the other gods that share a temple with them and the autocrator T. Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus, the pious Augustus, and M. Aurelius Verus, Caesar, Karpion, son of Anubio, put this altar up on behalf of the association of the Alexandrians using his own money in the 23rd year (of Antoninus' reign) on the first day of the month Pharmouthis (March 29) while Karnoutos, Sarapion, ...u...mnos, and Longinos (son of?) Ar.... held the priesthoods

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[173] *SIRIS* 707 = *IGRR* I 621.

[174] *SIRIS* 708.

The oldest inscription of Moesia inferior, a fragmented marble stele, comes from Histria. It records a public decree and indirectly reveals the political importance of Sarapis, whose name appears in a peculiar genetival form (Σαράπιος). The palaeography suggests the third century BCE as a likely date range.

Text:
[*Ἔδοξε τῆι β*]*ουλῆ*[*ι καὶ τῶι δή*|*μωι· ἐπι*]*μηνιεύον*[*τος*$^{5\text{-}6}$---|....]*υ τοῦ Κρατε*[--- *Ἡρακ*|*λεί ?*]*δης Μονίμου εἶπ*[*εν ἀπο*]|^{5}*σταλῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ* [*δήμου εἰς*]| *Καλχηδόνα ἄνδρ*[*ας τρεῖς?*| *ο*]*ἳ χρησμὸν λήψον*[*ται παρὰ*| *το*]*ῦ Θεοῦ τῆι πόλει ὑ*[*πὲρ τοῦ*| *Σαρ*]*άπιος· τίνα K*---[175]

Translation:
By the decree of the council and the people: when --- held office for a month --- son of Krate --- Heraklides (?) son of Monimos said that there had been dispatched by the people to the Chalcedone three (?) men to receive an oracle from the god for the city on behalf of Sarapis. A certain K---

The only other inscription from Histria, a fragment of a marble plate, has been chronologically placed in the third century CE. It provides some insight into an Isiac cult association. It discloses, together with the other inscription, the continuous existence of the cult.

Text:
--- *φιλ*[*ον*|--- *Μενε*]*κράτους* [---|--- *π*]*αστοφόρων* [--|--- *γ*]*υναῖκα δὲ α*[*ὐτοῦ*|^{5} --- *ἰ*]*εροναῦται ἀν*[*έθηκαν?*|---] *ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων* [---|--- *π*]*ροστατοῦντος* [*τοῦ*| *κοινοῦ ? Ἀρισ*]*τάρχου* ---|---[176]

Translation:
(---) beloved (---) son of (Mene)krates (---) of the *pastophoroi* (---) his wife (---) the *hieronautai* dedicated this using their own money (---) the association being under the leadership of Aristarchos (---)

The *hieronautai* (*ἱεροναῦται*) honored with this dedication the son of (Mene)krates, probably the head of the *pastophoroi*, and his wife. Both must have done something noteworthy either for the cult or, on a larger scale, for the city. The *ἱεροναῦται* can be, as Vidman has shown[177], equated with the *ναυάρχοι*. These men were in charge

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[175] *SIRIS* 709a = *SEG* 24 = *ISM* I 5.

[176] *SIRIS* 709.

[177] A longer discussion Vidman (1970), 76-87.

of the organizational aspects of the *nauigium Isidis*. Aristarchos' leadership function as a προστάτης or *praeses* should not be confused with that of *sacerdos*. Although our knowledge of the terminology leaves much to be desired, the available records strongly suggest that there was a distinct nomenclature for the spiritual and the organizational side of the cult. The persons involved with the organizational aspects need not necessarily have been cult initiates.

The only Isis and Sarapis related inscription from Tyras is a thanksgiving note inscribed on a marble base whose left side is damaged. The date of the dedication has been placed in the second to first century BCE.

Text:
--- ς Κρατίνου Σαράπιδι Ἴσιδι|--- Θεοῖς συνάοις χαριστήριον[178]

Translation:
An offering of ---s son of Kratinos to Sarapis, Isis, ---, and the other gods dwelling with them

Three fragments of a white marble plate from Olbia inform us about a temple construction at the time of Alexander Severus. Although in Greek, the inscription follows the pattern of a Roman building inscription.

Text:
Τύχῃ ἀγαθῇ·| Ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κυρίου αὐτοκράτος| Μ. Αὐρ(ηλίου) Σεουήρου Ἀλεξάνδρου τύχης| καὶ ἱερᾶς συνκλήτου καὶ στρατευμάτων|[5] καὶ ὑγείας καὶ εὐσταθίας τῆς πόλεως| θεοῖς ἐπηκόοις Σαράπι καὶ Εἴσι| καὶ Ἀσκληπιῷ καὶ Ὑγείᾳ κ[α]ὶ Ποσειδ<ῶ>νι| Αὐρ(ήλιος) Ἰουλιανὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου τοὺς| νηοὺς ἀπὸ θεμελίων σὺν τῇ στοᾷ|[10] καὶ κεραμώσει καὶ θύραις καὶ θ[υρί]|σι ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων τῇ πα[τρίδι]| κα[τεσκεύασεν][179]

Translation:
To Good Fortune. On behalf of the fortune of the lord autocrator M. Aurelius Severus Alexander and the revered Senate and the armies, on behalf of the health and tranquility of the city, Aurelius Julianus, son of Alexander, has built a temple structure from the ground up (the foundation-stones) with a colonnade and roofing with tiles and doors and windows with his own means in the land of his fathers for the heedful gods Sarapis and Isis and Asklepios and Hygeia and Poseidon

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[178] *SIRIS* 712 = *IOSPE* IV 1 = I² 5. Anubis might be supplied.
[179] *SIRIS* 713 = *IOSPE* I² 184.

The accusative plural of *νηός* is best translated as temple, otherwise the prepositional phrase *σὺν τῇ στοᾷ* does not make much sense. With the exception of Poseidon, the mentioned deities, for whom Julianus built the edifice, can be linked to water as well as healing. A temple dedicated to all these kindred deities is unique but, especially at the time of Severus Alexander, not unusual.

While Greek culture and a flourishing economy marked the port cities along the Black Sea coastline, Roman culture propagated through the presence of the Roman military impressed itself onto the cities further inland. An undated inscription probably from Troesmis[180], the home base of the *legio V Macedonica* from the second Dacian War to the Marcomannic War, illustrates this.

Text:
I(oui) o(ptimo) m(aximo) Serapi[181]

Translation:
To Jupiter the best and greatest Serapis

Even further inland, in Kutlovica, a limestone altar with a votive inscription has been found.

Text:
Numini Sara|[p]i Q. Cassicius| ---lianus ex uo|to posuit[182]

Translation:
To the *numen* Sarapis, Q. Cassicius ---lianus has put this up on grounds of a vow

There are only two more inscriptions found so far that address the *numen* Sarapis. One put up by a *duumuir* of Sarmizegetusa[183] and the other by a *procurator ad oleum in Galbae Ostiae portus utriusque* for the well-being and safe return of the emperor Marcus Aurelius and his family from Pannonia[184].

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[180] The inscription had been detected on the capital of a column in Galaţi.

[181] *SIRIS* 710.

[182] *SIRIS* 701 = *CIL* III 7448.

[183] See below *SIRIS* 694 (Apulum, Dacia).

[184] *SIRIS* 535 = *CIL* XIV 20 = *ILS* 372:
Pro salute et| reditu imp(eratoris) Anto|nini Aug(usti), Faustinae| Aug(ustae) liber-
orumque|[5] eorum aram sanctae| Is<i>di numini Sarapis,| sancto Silvano, Lar-
ib(us)| C. Pomponius| Turpilianus| |[10] proc(urator) ad oleum in Galbae| Ostiae
portus utriusque d(ono) d(edit)

The most extensive inscription from the province's interior is a damaged stone plate from Bela Slatina. It is a dedication, dated after 164, relating the construction of a temple of Sarapis. M. Iallus Bassus, governor of the province, began the construction and one of his successors completed it. This inscription highlights that high-ranking imperial administrators around Marcus Aurelius had embraced Sarapis even before the rain miracle further encouraged an interest in the god.

Text:
[Sar]apidi pro sa[l(ute) imperato|rum] Caesarum Aug[g(ustorum) M. Aureli An|to]nini et L. Aureli Veri [et Faustinae| Au]g(ustae) liber(orum)q(ue) eorum t[emplum cum sig|[5]ni]s M. Ialli(us) Bass(us) le[g(atus) Aug(usti) pr(o)| pr(aetore) in|ch]oauit consummauit ---|--- [l]eg(atus) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) ---[185]

Translation:
To Sarapis for the well-being of the Imperator Caesar Augustus M. Aurelius Antoninus and the Imperator Caesar Augustus L. Aurelius Verus and Faustina Augusta and their children, M. Iallius Bassus, *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, started the work on this temple with statues and (name missing) *legatus Augusti pro praetore* (concluded it)---

The content of an undated inscription, whose place of origin is also unknown, provides unfortunately, very little information.

Text:
--- Sarapid[i ---|--- ? decreto ui]|canor(um) p[osuit? ---][186]

Translation:
--- to Sarapis --- this was put up based on the resolution of the villagers

2.2.1) Summary

The Black sea region caught the interest of Greek colonists in the sixth century BCE, while the interior of the region remained virtually

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This inscription is from Nomentum, which yielded most inscriptions mentioning Egytian deities so far found in Latium. Tóth (1976), 108 considered the gods joined with Silvanus, "a typical god of the Danube provinces, more exactly, of Pannonia" as not belonging "to the Roman circle of gods." I agree that Silvanus was a Pannonian god, but disagree with the latter comment.

[185] *SIRIS* 702 = *CIL* III 12387.

[186] *SIRIS* 711 = *CIL* III 6226.

untouched until the area's integretion into the *imperium Romanum*. The earliest inscription comes from the coastal city of Histria. Its assigned date, the third century BCE, suggests that Histria had close economic ties with Alexandria which encouraged an introduction of Sarapis relatively shortly after his advancement to an imperial deity and guardian of the Ptolemaic rulers. Tomis, the city with the most epigraphic evidence concerning Isis and Sarapis, had most likely an *Iseum*. The inscriptions from Tomis nicely reflect the change that occurred when especially Sarapis turned into the protector of the *domus Augusta* for which the Latin inscription from Bela Slatina and the Greek one from Olbia serve as examples.

2.3) Dacia

2.3.1) Short Historical Survey

Located along the lower Danube, Dacia encompassed the Transylvanian plateau, reaching in the north to the Vistula (Bistriţa) and in the east to the Hierasus or Σέρετος (Siret)[187]. The Dacians like the Illyrian tribes in the West absorbed the culture of the invading Celts in the fourth century BCE. With the acquired knowledge from their invaders, the Dacians, previously an agricultural people, began mining the Carpathian gold, silver, iron, and salt deposits. In the third century they traded with the Greeks[188] and a century later their business relations extended into Illyricum, where Italian merchants came in contact with them.

Dacia became a nuisance to the Romans when Burebistas united all Dacians for the first time in 60 BCE and overpowered Celtic and Illyrian tribes south and west of their territory. Thus, the Dacians were in the vicinity of the Roman province of Macedonia. Since they did not move further and Rome's internal politics dictated another agenda, Dacia was left alone. While Pompey courted Burebistas[189] for mercenaries, Caesar, having triumphed over Pompey, planned to march against the Dacians[190]. His murder, however, prevented it.

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[187] C. Daicoviciu, "La Transylvanie dans l'antiquité," in *La Transylvanie* (Bucarest, 1938), 71-163.

[188] I. Glodariu *Dacian Trade with the Hellenistic and Roman World*, trans. N. Hampartumian, *BAR* Supplement Series 8 (1976).

[189] *SIG* 3 762.

[190] Suet. *Caes*. 44.3.

But Burebistas was also assassinated and with his death the Dacian unity began to crumble.

If the king of the Getae was in actuality the king of the Dacians, since ancient authors tended to use them interchangeably, then Octavian had his daughter Julia betrothed to Cotiso, King of the Getae[191] after her engagement with Antony's son had been broken off. Nothing came of this proposed alliance but it stresses the strategic importance Augustus ascribed to Dacia or more generally the area along the lower Danube. When Pannonia and probably Moesia were integrated into the Roman empire, Rome's military presence bordered in the west and south on Dacia. The Dacians, without a strong leader and faced with Rome's military presence, did not cause any major problems during the time of the Julio-Claudians.

It was with the leadership of Decebalus that they once more became a major force in the East. Domitian's generals, Oppius Sabinus and Cornelius Fuscus, were defeated in 85 and 86 CE respectively. After a Roman victory at Tapae, Domitian made peace and recoginzed Dacia as a client kingdom. It was Trajan, who in two campaigns (101-102 and 105 CE), utterly defeated Decebalus and destroyed the Dacian stronghold, Sarmizegetusa[192]. Thus, Dacia was subdued and the conquered area was formally turned into a province. Hadrian divided the province in 118-119 CE and detached the area known as Porolissensis[193] from Dacia. Marcus Aurelius placed the *tres Daciae* under one governor. The last Roman province was also the first one to be abandoned.

After the second Dacian War and Trajan's Parthian campaign the *legio I adiutrix pia fidelis* and the *legio IV Flauia felix* left Dacia and only the *legio XIII gemina* remained based at Apulum. After the Marcomannic War, the *legio V Macedonica* was moved from Troesmis (Moesia inferior) to Potaissa in Dacia. With the abandonment of Dacia in the 270's, both legions stationed in Dacia were moved to the newly created Dacia ripensis. Oescus became the base of the *legio V Macedonica* and Ratiaria the home of the *legio XIII gemina*.

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[191] Suet. *Aug.* 63.

[192] C. and H. Daicoviciu *Sarmizegethusa* (Bucarest, 1963).

[193] C. Daiconviciu and D. Protase, "Un nouveau diplôme de Dacia Porolissensis," *JRS* (1961), 63-70, especially pp. 66-9 on the problem of administration.

2.3.2) Inscriptions

Three of the twenty inscriptions from Dacia, two from the provincial capital Sarmizegetusa, dedicated to a *dea regina,* and one from Romula (Reşca), consecrated to a Placida *regina*, will not be discussed. There is not enough convincing evidence, especially since further epithets are lacking, that *dea* and Placida *regina* ought to be equated with Isis. As in the case of the inscription from Solva (Pannonia inferior), the most immediate choice is Juno. Of the remaining seventeen inscriptions, six come from Apulum, three from Sarmizegetusa, two from Potaissa, two from Deva, and one each from Micia and Ampelum, while one is without any traceable place of origin.

The only datable inscription from Sarmizegetusa has been assigned to the period of the end of the second to the early third century CE. The *procurator* Caesidius Respectus, about whom nothing more is known, dedicated it to the unconquered god Sarapis. The rare combination of *inuictus deus* with Sarapis is most often used in the Danubian provinces during the reign of Antoninus Caracalla.

Text:
[I]nuicto| deo Sera|pidi| Caesidius|[5] Respectus| proc(urator) Aug(usti) n(ostri)| et Apronilla| eius[194]

Translation:
To the unconquered god Serapis, Caesidius Respectus procurator of our emperor and his (wife) Apronilla

One of the two undated inscriptions is the only evidence from the Rhine and Danubian provinces for an *Augustalis*, who dedicated an inscription to one of the Egyptian deities. This singularity is striking in light of the position the Egyptian deities eventually held as patrons of the imperial household and the imperial worship.

Text:
De[a]e Isidi| Priscianus Aug(ustalis)| col(oniae) Sarmiz(egetusae) metrop(oleos) et| Aurelia Fortunata|[5] liberta eius[195]

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[194] *SIRIS* 685 = *AE* 1930, 14 = 1933,12 = *IDR* III 2, 331.
[195] *SIRIS* 683 = *CIL* III 1428 = *IDR* III 2, 228.

Translation:
To the goddess Isis, Priscianus, the *Augustalis* of the colony and capital Sarmizegetusa, and his freedwoman Aurelia Fortunata

The remaining fragments of the third inscription from the provincial capital suggest the second half of the second to the third century CE as a possible date range. Inscriptions asking Sarapis for the well-being of the emperor had been especially prominent among high ranking military men during the reign of Marcus Aurelius and Antoninus Caracalla.

Text:
[Sera]pidi|--- pro salute| [et incolumita]te| imp(eratoris) Caes(aris)| ---[196]

Translation:
To Serapis --- for the well-being and safety of the Imperator Caesar ---

A building inscription for a temple of Isis from Micia brings us into contact with the Varenii of Sarmizegetusa who shaped local and provincial politics from the second half of the second to the beginning of the third century[197].

Text:
Isidi ex uo|to temp[lum]| fecit D[o]|mitia [Ua]|[5]renii| [Pude]|ntis (coniunx) Uettia| [...] et Au[...][198]

Translation:
To Isis, Domitia (the wife) of [Va]renius Pudens fulfilling a vow has built a temple (together with) Vettia and Au[...]

While Vidman provisionally placed M. Statius Priscus' inscription in the area between Micia and Deva, where a military station was located[199], Popa believed that it was originally from Sarmizegetusa or Apulum[200]. Although these two cities might seem more suitable for a dedication by the governor of Dacia superior from 156 to 158[201], first because it was the provincial capital and second because it had

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[196] *SIRIS* 684 = *CIL* III 7920 = *IDR* III 2, 227.

[197] *CIL* III 1198-1492, 1513, 1514, 13779.

[198] *AE* 1975, 727 replacing the reading of *CIL* III 1341 = *SIRIS* 686.

[199] *SIRIS* 687.

[200] A. I. Popa, "O nouă inscripţie închinată Zeiţei Isis, La Apulum," *Studii şi cercetări de istorie veche* 13 (1962), 147-152.

[201] A. Stein *Die Reichsbeamten von Dazien* (Budapest, 1944), 27-8.

the most Isis and Sarapis related inscriptions, nothing speaks against Priscus' putting up his inscription in or close to a military station.

Text:
[I]sidi ---| M. Stati[us Priscus leg(atus) Au]g(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore)[202]

Translation:
To Isis ---, M. Statius Priscus *legatus Augusti pro praetore* ---

Especially in light of the votive inscription from Deva, Vidman's suggestion makes sense.

Text:
Deae [I]s[idi]| reg(inae)| ala I Hi[sp(anorum)]| Campag[on(um)]|[5] sub cur[a]| M. Pl(auti) Ru[fi]| praef(ecti) <al>a<e>| equo pub(lico)| u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[203]

Translation:
To the goddess Isis, the queen, the *ala I Hispanorum Campagonum* under the care of M. Plautus Rufus, prefect of the auxiliary troops and of the equestrian order, fulfilled their vow gladly and deservedly

The fact that a whole military unit gave a vow to Isis is unprecedented in the Rhine and Danubian provinces.

Two coins, dated to Hadrian's reign, found next to an altar, provide a *terminus post quem* for the earliest inscription from Apulum.

Text:
Isidi| myr(ionymae) sac(rum)| Ael(ia) Iusta| pro Uer(anio?) Fir|[5]no filio| u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)[204]

Translation:
Consecrated to Isis having countless names, Aelia Justa gladly and deservedly fulfilled her vow for her son Ver(anius) Firnus (more likely Firmus)

Together with C. Julius Metrobianus, who was a *duumuir* of the Dacian capital, these are the only dedications by non-military persons. Metrobianus also held, in addition to his post as *duumuir*, the

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[202] *SIRIS* 687. The whole inscription could have read: [Deae I]sidi [et Sarapidi or Serapidi] M. Stati[us Priscus leg(atus) Au]g(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) [prou(incia) Dac(iae) sup(erior).

[203] *SIRIS* 688 = *CIL* III 1342.

[204] *SIRIS* 692.

highest religious office available to a provincial and was a priest of Aesculapius. One could explain Metrobianus' choice of Sarapis with the fact that Sarapis, like Aesculapius, had healing properties. In Sarapis' case the link with the imperial cult might also have played a role.

Text:
Numini Serapis| C. Iul(ius) Metrobianus IIui[r(alis)]| col(oniae) Zarmiz(egetusae) sacerdos| dei Aes[culapi pon]t(ifex) q(uin)[q(uennalis)][205]

Translation:
To the divinty of Serapis, C. Julius Metrobianus, *duumvir* of the colony Sarmizegetusa, priest of the god Aesculapius, *pontifex* for five years

Two governors of the province have placed inscriptions in Apulum, the home base of the *legio XIII gemina*. The legate Ti. Julius Flaccinus, who was also the legate of *legio XIII gemina*[206], administered the province between 119-157.

Text:
Sarapi| Aug(usto)| sacrum| Tib. Iulius| Flaccinus|[5] leg(atus) Aug(usti)| pr(o) pr(aetore)[207]

Translation:
Consecrated to Sarapis the venerated one, Tiberius Julius Flaccinus *legatus Augusti pro praetore*

L. Aemilius Carus was governor during the reign of M. Aurelius[208]. As Vidman had already pointed out[209], Carus' father, governor of Arabia under Antoninus Pius[210], had dedicated an inscription in his province to the well-being of the emperor, the imperial family, the senate, and the people in the name of Ζεύς, Ἥλιος μέγας, Σάραπις, Ἶσις, Νεώτερα, and other σύνναοι Θεοί. Although this inscription, in its recorded form, lacks the request, it includes

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[205] *SIRIS* 694 = *CIL* III 973.

[206] *AE* 1934, 11.

[207] *SIRIS* 689 = *CIL* III 7768.

[208] Stein (1944), 44-6 suggested 172-7, E. Groag, PIR I², 53, n. 338 opted for 161-6.

[209] *SIRIS* 690 cf. 366.

[210] His *cursus honorum CIL* VI 1333. Mora has father and son to be the same.

the major gods of the earlier dedication. Essentially, L. Aemilius Carus relied on the same gods as his father.

Text:
Sarapidi | Ioui Soli | Isidi Lunae | Dianae |[5] dis deabusq(ue) | conseruatorib(us) | L. Aemil(ius) Carus | leg(atus) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) | III Daciarum[211]

Translation:
To Sarapis, Jupiter, Sol, Isis, Luna, Diana, and the savior gods and goddesses, L. Aemilius Carus *legatus Augusti pro praetore* of the three Daciae

The following dedication, put up by a military tribune of senatorial rank, could easily be contemporaneous with Aemilius Carus' inscription. L. Junius Rufinus Proculianus had been appointed governor of Dalmatia around 184[212]. This means that he must have held the post of military tribune before that appointment; hence, during the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

Text:
Sarapi et Isidi | L. Iunius Rufi | nus Proculia | nus trib(unus) l(ati)c(lavius) |[5] mil(itum) leg(ionis) XIII g(eminae)[213]

Translation:
To Sarapis and Isis, L. Junius Rufinus Proculianus, military tribune of senatorial rank of the *legio XIII gemina*

Proculianus might have been the son of M. Junius Rufinus Sabinianus, consul of 155 and proconsul of Asia in 170[214]. L. Junius Rufinus Proculianus himself might have been the father of Junius Rufinus, governor of Macedonia in 194[215].

The undated inscription by C. Cosconius, *primus pilus* of the *legio XIII gemina*, emphasizes the importance of Isis and Sarapis for the legion's leading officers. Cosconius seems to have been a descendant of C. Cosconius, proconsul of 78-77 BCE, who defeated the Delmetae.

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[211] *SIRIS* 690 = *CIL* III 7771.
[212] *CIL* III 3202.
[213] *SIRIS* 691 = *CIL* III 7770.
[214] *PIR* I 811.
[215] *PIR* I 812.

Text:
Serap[idi] | C. Cosco[nius] | Sabin[ianus] | p(rimus) p(ilus) leg(ionis) [XIII g(eminae)] | [5] fe[cit][216]

Translation:
To Serapis, C. Cosconius Sabinianus the senior centurion of the *legio XIII gemina* has constructed this

Farther north, in Potaissa, which became the home base of the *legio V Macedonica* after the Marcomannic Wars, we find two inscriptions. The date of the votive inscription of C. Julius Antigonus and his wife Flavia Apollinaria, both of Greek origin, to Isis and Sarapis falls into the time on or after the move of the *legio V Macedonica* to Potaissa. As Antigonus stated, he was a *centurio* of that legion.

Text:
Isidi | et Serapi | C. Julius Ant | igonus [(centurio)] | [5] leg(ionis) V M(acedonicae) p(iae) <c(onstantis)> | et Fl(auia) Apol | linaria | eius u(otum) l(ibentes) s(oluerunt)[217]

Translation:
To Isis and Serapis, C. Julius Antigonus *centurio* of the *legio V Macedonica pia constans* and his (wife) Flavia Apollinaria gladly fulfilled their vow

The second inscription from this colony comes from two members of a *collegium Isidis* in charge of the organizational aspect of the association. The *pater* C. Julius Martialis was the president and the *quaestor* L. Livius Victorianus its financial controller. The scribe's unfamiliarity with Greek explains the misspelling of *myrionyma*.

Text:
Isidi myrioni | mae C. Iul(ius) Mar | tialis pater et | L. Liuius Uictori | [5] nus quaestor | collegio Isidis | d(ono) d(ederunt)[218]

Translation:
To Isis having countless names, C. Julius Martialus the senior member and L. Livius Victorinus the financial controller for the college of Isis have given this as a present

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[216] *SIRIS* 693 = *CIL* III 7769.
[217] *SIRIS* 697 = *CIL* III 881.
[218] *SIRIS* 698 = *CIL* III 882.

Ampelum, a customs station along the route to the Dacian gold mines[219], supplies a dedication to Isis for the well-being of a certain M. Julius Apollinaris. The dedicators were two imperial slaves, who oversaw the station. Julius Apollinaris was perhaps the station's *conductor*. Among the dedications put up by agents of the *publicum portorium Illyrici* Isis was addressed four times (or 6%) while her consort Sarapis was not mentioned at all[220].

Text:
[Isi]di [pro salut]|e M. Iul(ii) Ap[olli]|naris Uer[u]s| Aug(usti) n(ostri) Roma|[5]nus Aug(usti) n(ostri) uern(ae)| <u>il(ici) posuit[221]

Translation:
To Isis for the well-being of M. Julius Apollinaris, the overseer, Verus, a slave born into the imperial household, and Romanus, a slave born into the imperial household, put this up

A small undated terra cotta disk[222] with a Greek inscription, from Alburus maior, like Ampelum a customs station, originated most likely in Greece or another Greek speaking-province. Neither the phrase on the disk, which employs the Christian motif of propitiation, nor the engraving on the base of a bronze statuette of uncertain origin and date, prove cult initiation.

Text:
[*Εἵλε*|*ώς μοι*| *ὁ Σέραπις*| *καὶ οἱ θεοὶ*|[5] *πάντες*[223]

Translation:
May Serapis and all other gods be propitious to me

Text:
Isis patrona[224]

Translation:
Isis the patroness

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[219] Á. Dobó, *Publicum Portorium Illyrici*, *Dissertationes Pannonicae* Ser. 2, fasc. 16 (Budapest, 1940), 168-9.

[220] Calculated from Dobó's list of inscriptions.

[221] *SIRIS* 695 = *CIL* III 7837.

[222] Circa 11cm in diameter.

[223] *SIRIS* 696 = *CIG* 6814.

[224] *SIRIS* 699 = *CIL* III 1558.

2.3.4) Summary

Governors and high-ranking imperial military personnel formed the largest group of dedicators. In light of Dacia's history, however, this fact is not surprising. Subjugated by Trajan, it always remained, primarily because of its geographic position, a military buffer zone. Despite of the province's late integration and its military character, the cult of Isis gained a foothold. The only two inscriptions of persons not involved in the administration of the province or its capital relate the existence of a temple of Isis in Micia and a *collegium Isidis* in Potaissa. The difference between personal cultic interest and those guided by imperial 'propaganda' could not be better shown.

3) Conclusion

Two aspects emerge from the survey of the epigraphical material from the various Danubian provinces. The inscriptions are either expressions of personal devotion to Isis and/or Sarapis or dedications that address these deities in connection with the emperor or the imperial family, the *domus Augusta*. While the former type occurs most often in cities with a civilian character, the latter can most often be found in military locations or border areas as dedications of military or administrative employees. Inscriptions that address Isis and especially Sarapis as protectors of the emperor, his family, and the Roman empire as a whole were signs of loyalty and an indication that the Ptolemaic myth of succession and dynastic rule illustrated the extraordinary political position of the *princeps*.

Pannonia best shows the contextual and chronological difference between inscriptions from civilian and border areas. These inscriptions show that the addressing of Sarapis in connection with the *domus Augusta* received an impetus during the reign of Marcus Aurelius and was most often used during the reign of Antoninus Caracalla. Even a province like Raetia, which has yielded only one inscription so far, suggests that individual-related inscriptions come most likely from highly Romanized towns with a civilian character. This pattern repeats itself in the other Danubian provinces. Noricum, with its Isiac sanctuaries on so-called Celtic 'holy mountains,' illustrates an additional aspect that has to be considered; namely, the significance of already existing ideological and geographic realities that could effect an introduction of the cult.

EPILOGUE

A consequence of Rome's advance to become the dominant power in the Mediterranean was the reception of new ideas. Unchanged or modified, these concepts became part of Rome's *Gedankenwelt*. The same was true for the integration of foreign deities and their cults. Having annexed southern Italy, the Romans there first came into contact with the cult of Isis and Sarapis. This exposure was intensified after the Social War, the Mithridatic sack of Delos, and the consequent return of Italian merchants.

An early first-century BCE inscription from Rome's eighth region is the earliest testimony for the existence of a cult association inside Rome's *pomerium*. The examination of Late Republican coins with Isis-related symbols as control marks has shown the artistic and intellectual roots of these images. Anachronistic assumptions that the cult of Isis and Sarapis possessed a social or a political program are based on two erroneous postulates. First, the cult of Isis with its purification, abstinence, and initiation rituals - elements not foreign to other mystery cults - had unintentionally paved the way for the successful integration of Christianity. Second, early Christianity had social and political aspirations and, since the cult of Isis was the predecessor of Christianity, it could not but have had the same social and political aims.

Literary evidence, although not contemporaneous, allows the inference that the actions against the cult in Republican times and during Augustus' and Tiberius' reigns were political in nature. The need for political and social stability effected the sporadic actions against the cult. *Superstitiones* were singled out as causes for instability because a Roman's comprehension of the world in terms of simple causalities and as a reciprocal network of gods and mortals fostered such a conclusion. The continuous assimilation of foreign cultural and intellectual elements as well as the fading of Cleopatra and Mark Antony as Rome's major foes furthered the integration of Isis and Sarapis into the Roman pantheon. The cult advanced to a *sacrum publicum* in the mid-first century CE and the possibility to single it out vanished.

Emperors like Gaius and Nero advanced with their ruling style a duplication of the Ptolemaic ruler concept and indirectly helped promote the two deities. At the same time, the idea of the ruler as a person standing outside the human sphere received an ideological

structure. The reverence Vespasian and his sons demonstrated toward Isis and Sarapis emphasizes Alexandria's importance in Vespasian's claim to the state's highest political office. As a result of this, Isis and Sarapis obtained the status of imperial deities.

Hadrian's intellectual interest in Egypt generated a popular curiosity for Egyptian or Egyptianizing art objects. Egypt, thus made broadly accessible, lost the last touch of exclusiveness. Marcus Aurelius admired and utilized for his own and the state's benefit the millennia-old knowledge that Egyptian *magi* possessed. The 'rain miracle' brought about by Arnouphis, the Egyptian *magus* in Aurelius' entourage, caused leading military men in the Danubian provinces, the area most involved in Rome's struggle against invading barbarians, to put up inscriptions dedicated to Sarapis while simultaneously asking for the well-being of the emperor. Commodus' reign, like that of Gaius, Nero, and Domitian, enhanced once more the notion of the emperor as operating in the intermediate sphere between the terrestrial and the celestial. This extraordinary position and perception of the emperor matched the original Ptolemaic ruler concept. Its myth of succession and dynastic rule best captured the existing political realities at Rome.

To secure his position and consolidate the empire, Septimius Severus had to promote himself as the most suitable successor to the highest political office. Since continuity of tradition denoted stability, Septimius Severus advanced his person by implementing already established conceptual patterns. The novelty was that he had himself portrayed as Sarapis, which in itself was a natural conclusion of an ideological development which began with Vespasian's political employment of Sarapis. Antoninus Caracalla ordered the construction of a temple of Sarapis on the Quirinal. This temple marks the end of the integration process. Sarapis, the divine counterpart of the emperor and the protector of the *domus Augusta*, stood on equal footing with *Iuppiter optimus maximus*, Rome's main divine guardian.

In the transitional period of the fourth century CE, when pagan institutions rapidly lost ground and were replaced by Christian customs, Isis and Sarapis do not appear as the most prominent symbols of the pagan cause. They were simply two of many deities which the conqueror of the world, Rome, had woven into its divine canopy. Isiac initiates, with their shaven heads, were always a sight to behold and easy targets for a satirical jab, whether pagan or Christian. Literary evidence has to be studied in its textual as well as historical context. In doing so, one discovers that the cult of Isis

was hardly, as some scholars postulated, an awesome challenger to Christianity. The greatest challenge to the new religion came from the intellectual superstructure. Rome, protectress and guardian of all cults, had obtained world dominion through conscientious cultic performance. Christianity not only had to be integrated into this cause and effect understanding of the world, which meant that whatever went before became a means towards the end, i.e. the coming of the true *soter*, but it also had to take on a political dimension, since Roman religion and politics were intertwined. In essence, the 'idea of Rome' had to be, and ultimately, was infused with Christian meaning. As emperors embraced Christianity and pagans were kept from political power, the cohesion of the pagan religious system, once an integral part of imperial politics, disintegrated. Paganism turned into a private matter.

The survey of the epigraphical material from the Rhine and Danubian provinces has shown that imperial employment of the deities independent of the cult could incite among the inhabitants of the empire an increased interest in the deities. Most dedicators of inscriptions addressing Isis and/or Sarapis were not cult initiates and those employing Sarapis especially, in connection with the emperor and the imperial family, were military or administrative employees. With the integration of Isis and Sarapis into the Roman pantheon, the deities and their cult functioned as religious prototypes and propagated an acceptance of the *princeps* as a human being beyond normal conventions. They were also an element in the binding of the periphery to the center or the inhabitants of the empire to the ruler. Indeed, religious realities do not exist in isolation but in a historical, social, and geographic context[1].

[1] Malaise (1984), 1616: "On a ainsi oublié trop souvent que [l]es réalités religieuses n'existaient pas isolées en soi, mais se greffaient, vivantes, sur un contexte historique, social et géographique."

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